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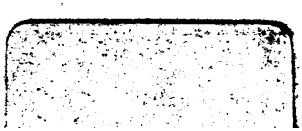

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GENUINE LETTERS

FROM A

GENTLEMAN

TO A

YOUNG LADY HIS PUPIL.

CALCULATED

To form the TASTE, regulate the JUDGMENT, and improve the MORALS.

WRITTEN SOME YEARS SINCE.

Now first revised and published with NOTES and ILLUSTRATIONS,

By THOMAS HULL,

Of the THEATRE ROYAL, in COVENT-GARDEN.

How would'st thou sport with us in learned Play,
And sage Advice in Wit's light Strain convey!

See Let. 48. P. 211.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for J. BELL, near *Exeter Exchange*, *Strand*, and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

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DEDICATION

TO

Mr. PRESTON's Pupil.

MADAM,

GRatitude and Propriety alike induce me to dedicate theſe Letters to you, to whom they were originally addreſſed. From you I received the Permiſſion to publiſh them, and to you they naturally belong.

Be pleaſed to conſider this Dedication a Tribute to Mr. Preſton, (whoſe Life was ſo eſſential, and whoſe Memory is ſo dear to you) as well as a Token of the continual Regard of

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PREFACE.

I AM well aware that ſome of the earlieſt Letters to be met in this Collection will, at firſt Glance, appear too trivial for Publication; and that Perſons, who limit their Peruſal to them, will be apt to pronounce unfavourably of the whole. I therefore think it neceſſary to aſſign my Reaſons for including them, and, at the ſame Time, give a ſhort Account of the Work in general.

Theſe Letters are truly, what they are announced in the Title-page, *Genuine*. The Lady, to whom they were written, entruſted me with the Publication. On my firſt Peruſal of them, I thought they contained Matter much too good to be loſt. The moral Leſſons, wherewith they abound, being chiefly calculated for younger Minds, I took the Liberty in my Propoſals to recommend the Work as a

proper

proper Companion to the Time of Education in both Sexes. Thoſe Letters, which contain Critiques on many celebrated Writers, appeared to me not unworthy the Notice of Men of Reading and Erudition. I reviſed and tranſcribed thoſe on *Homer*, in particular, with the Original, and *Pope*'s Tranſlation at my hand, and can, at leaſt, venture to affirm there is a great Deal of *New* in Mr. *Preſton*'s Remarks. I declare, with great Truth, that I have his Reputation at Heart, more than my own Emolument, and therefore hope, for his Sake, my weak Judgment may not be called in Queſtion.

My Motive for retaining thoſe initiatory Letters, which ſeem leſs conſequential, were partly in hope that they might have the ſame good Effect on other Pupils, which they had on his. It may be objected that they contain Rules which are to be found in every French Grammar. Granted. But, to uſe a Maxim of our Writer's, may not a Precept or two, ſcattered in this light, epiſtolary Manner, have more Force than all the formal Documents that ever were penned? What has been, may be. I am a Witneſs that his Pupil, pro-

profited excellently by this Mode of Inſtruction; I therefore think the Inſertion of them cannot be wholly uſeleſs; beſide that it gives an Opportunity of admiring that kind and eaſy Pliancy with which a Man of Learning and Genius deſcended to the Level of a puerile Comprehenſion.

I lament that it has not been in my Power to obtain a Sight of the young Lady's Letters. We have her Tutor's Word for her being poſſeſſed of good Senſe and a Quickneſs of Apprehenſion. Her Remarks therefore could not but be entertaining, if not inſtructive; in-as-much as they came pure and genuine from the Heart, unſophiſticated with caſuiſtical Reaſonings or Pedantry of Expreſſion. He frequently mentions the Pleaſure her Letters afford him; unfortunately they are all wanting: ſhe had the Affliction to loſe her Friend and Inſtructor, when he was many Miles diſtant from her, and all Attempts to recover his Papers proved fruitleſs.

To account for the endearing Terms in which the Tutor ſometimes addreſſes his Pupil, be it known he was her *God-Father*; and

and his unremitted Attention to the Improvement of her Mind demonſtrates how conſcientiouſly he regarded that important Office he undertook at her Baptiſm, which is too often, by the Generality of Mankind, as iniquitouſly neglected, as it inconſiderately aſſumed.

For the Gratification of ſuch Readers, as wiſh to be more nearly acquainted with Mr. *Preſton*, I have prevailed on the Lady, to ſketch his Character, which I hereunto ſubjoin.

I have little more to ſay. I mean to give an uſeful Work to the Publick. Should I fail in my Judgment, my Intention, at leaſt, is good; and however weak my Abilities may be, I have this comfortable Reflection, that they are dedicated to a *moral Purpoſe*; to which Important End I wiſh that all my little Labours ſhould conduce, as moſt ſuitable to my Inclination, and moſt conſiſtent with my Profeſſion.

LETTER

To the EDITOR.

YOU aſk me for a Character of my rever'd Mr. *P.* You tell me I muſt haſten, for that the Publication is in great forwardneſs. Alas, what a Taſk have you given me! already have I ſuffered extreme Pain on a Re-peruſal of his Letters, which, ſince his Death, I have never dared to look into, till you encouraged me, by ſaying they might be of the ſame Service to others, which they had once been to me. Flattered by this Opinion, I ventured to read them again; all my Affection, all my Gratitude, all my Reſpect awakens; but all embittered by the Recollection of my Loſs; he lives and dies to me again, on this Review of what I owe to him. I am now leſs equal to the Taſk you require of me, than I was, when I firſt delivered the Papers to your Hands. I then deferred writing what

what you wiſhed, through a Conſciouſneſs of Incapacity, and a Shame at delivering my Sentiments intentionally to the Preſs. That Conſciouſneſs, that Shame, is now abſorbed in my Fears for the ſacred Reputation of my beloved Teacher; what will an idle, a diſſipated Public ſay of theſe valuable Letters? Should they be treated with Scorn, or even Diſreſpect, I ſhall never forgive myſelf. Is it not poſſible that Perſons, without a Tythe of his Underſtanding, his Education, or his Virtue, will ſet themſelves up for Condemners of his Senſe, his Literature, and his Morals? Have not I treſpaſſed on the Duty I for ever owe his Memory in running ſuch a Riſque? My Motive muſt be my Apology; and if the Departed know any thing of the Actions of Survivors, he will know I mean but to purſue his own Plan, of doing as extenſive Good as my Power will let me. To that Public, who will ſhortly receive them, I can only ſay, the favoured Individual, to whom they were addreſſed, owes all the little Merit, you, and her other partial Friends have ever aſcribed to her (under Heaven) to the Leſſons ſhe received from the Author of theſe Letters; naturally petulant capri-

capricious, obſtinate, he knew, with happy Art, how to turn even her Failings to Account; and ſkillfully uſed even the *Curvings* of her Temper as Inſtruments to the Improvement of her Mind. The Letters truly are, what you have announced them, Genuine; the Writer was a Gentleman of an antient and honourable Family, once of affluent Fortunes; the Name, you have adopted in lieu of his own, indicates the Misfortune of his Life. He was accounted a Man of the firſt Senſe among Men of Senſe; his Education was compleat, his Literature deep, yet poliſhed; his Taſte nice, yet not *cavillous*; (if I may uſe the Word) his Wit was as ſound as his Judgment, and as ſweet as his Manners; his Humour was infinite, and harmleſs as it was pleaſant. This was his Character from Men of Standard Judgment; for it is not to be ſuppoſed that *I*, at any Time, could be capable of underſtanding this Part of it, much leſs at Sixteen, at which Age I had the Unhappineſs to loſe him; but what I have repeated is no more than I have heard often aſſerted by Perſons of eſtabliſhed Reputation for Skill in what they ſpoke of; But his Heart—to deſcribe that, is *properly* my

my Province. Yet how ſhall I be equal to it? Pious as a primitive Chriſtian, Chearful in the ſame Degree he was pious; Benevolent, in the moſt extenſive Senſe of the Word; Beneficent, as far as a limited Power would let him; Mild in his Cenſures, Strict in his Actions, Charitable in Thought, Word, and Deed; Merciful even to an Inſect; Kind not only in Intention and Act, but his very Addreſs was Kindneſs pourtrayed; yet was he, to uſe his own Words, ſpeaking of Mrs. K. "very reſentful, if he conceived himſelf "ſlighted." A ſtrong Trait of his Character was the Pliancy, with which he yielded to his fallen Fortunes, and the *un*-yielding Spirit with which he ſupported an Independence, in deſpight of them. If it would not appear too fanciful I ſhould ſay he united in his Temper the poetical Deſcriptions of the Ivy and the Oak. The Misfortune hinted at (owing to Education and the Principles of his Family early imbibed) in the youthful Part of his Life, depriving him of the Means of providing for a Family equal to their Birth and his Spirit, kept him a ſingle Man; my Father and himſelf, (involved

in

in the ſame Cauſe, and the ſame Conſequences) were the moſt intimate Friends; he prevailed on Mr. P. to take Charge of me as a God-Child, an Office he held ſo ſacred, that he never took it on him but for me; and, from that Time, he looked on me as his own, and, I'm ſure, felt all the Affection of a Father for me; nor did I ever feel the Loſs of one (my own dying while I was an Infant) till I loſt him.

Thus have I endeavoured to fulfil your Requeſt; and be aſſured that neither my Affection or my Gratitude have impelled me to flatter the Character of a Man, whoſe Worth exceeds the Power of Words. That the precious Depoſit, I have committed to your Care, may meet with ſuch a Reception as the Gentleneſs of your own Heart and the Goodneſs of your Intention induces you to think it will, is at preſent the moſt fervent Wiſh

of Dear Sir, &c.

P. S. Such of your Readers, as are inclined to judge liberally, will allow for the Plainneſs of the Style, in a Correſpondence with a Girl from ſeven Years old to ſixteen. He ſtrove to be plain in order to be quicker

quicker underſtood, and the rather, as ſome of his Subjects are abſtruſe; but the Definition, the Illuſtration, the Leſſon, the Sentiment, the Moral, are equally good, as if dreſſed in a more lifted Style; they may be conſidered, as Mr. P. himſelf ſays of *Creech*'s *Horace*, "a wholeſome Pill without any Gilding."

GENUINE

GENUINE LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Mr. PRESTON to Miſs NANCY BLISSET.

Dear Nancy,

I WAS juſt now at your Mama's, who was gone out; ſo I don't know how you got to W——, or whether ſhe has heard from you *.

* It is to be remembered here that the Pupil was, at this Time, juſt turned ten Years of Age; which accounts for the Tutor's deſcending in his Stile to the Comprehenſion of a Child.

I ſend you here encloſed a Craftſman *. All the political Papers of this Day are but indifferent; however, I would not be worſe than my Promiſe; beſides, the Articles of News may divert you.

Pray let me know if you got ſafe to the Country, and if you had any Adventures by the Way †, worth noticing. Be ſure to write to me. Give my humble

* There was, at the Time of this Correſpondence, as great a Conteſt between high Party and low, Court and Country, as we have now between Majority and Minority. This exeited the young Lady's Curioſity, which it was the Tutor's Rule never to thwart. He hoped alſo to turn this Curioſity to Account, and, by feeding her Vanity, give her a Taſte for Hiſtory, particularly that of her own Country.

† He wiſhed to give her a Habit of making Obſervations and Reflections on every Occurrence, to prevent

ble Service to your Aunt. How does she do?

I allow you to write the first Letter you send me in English, if you please. I shall write you in French the next Time, and send you an Exercise.

I am, dear Nancy,

your affectionate Friend,

London,
July 14, 1739. J. PRESTON.

LETTER II.

Ma chere Nannette,

J'AY receu votre Lettre par le Poste d'Hier, mais c'est sans Datte. Je vais, toute à l'heure en Campaigne, où je

prevent Things sliding off her Mind; and, by encouraging her to transmit them to Paper, help her to develope her own Ideas, and form a Stile.

reſterai juſqu'à Mardi. A mon Retour, je vous marquerai les petits Defauts dans les Traductions que vous avez fait. En general elles ſont fort bonnes, et je les ay lû avec beaucoup de Plaiſir *.

Faites mes Compliments à Madame S——. J'ay donné votre Lettre à votre Mere.

Je ſuis,

votre très ſincere Ami,

A Londres, ce 31, *de Juilett*, 1739. J. PRESTON.

* It was Mr. P——'s conſtant Method to uſe more Praiſe than Blame, ſince from the Turn of his Pupil's Diſpoſition, he found he got Credit for the latter in Proportion as he beſtowed the former; and ſhe generally ſtopped ſhort, if ſhe found the Balance on the wrong Side.

LET-

LETTER III.

Dear Nancy,

I Have the Pleaſure of yours of the 14th current. I have not yet got Time to look into the Tranſlation, to ſee if it is done right.

Pray tranſlate the encloſed Paſſage *; not at once, but take two or three different Times to do it in, and ſtudy it well, for the French is very nice; which I ſhall ſend as ſoon as you have finiſhed the Tranſlation.

Why do you begin Words with a ſmall, that ought to be begun with a

* A Paſſage from the Engliſh Telemachus to be rendered into French.

great Letter? Pray learn to write in a fashionable Way.

Give my hearty Service to your Aunt. We have no News.

Je suis tous jours,
ma chere Nannette,
votre Ami très affectioné*,

July 17, 1739. J. PRESTON.

LETTER IV.

Dear Nancy,

I Have sent you the Original of your two Translations. There are Differences between them, that I don't think much of; but pray observe the Nicety of

* This little Mixture of the Languages in one and the same Letter is frequently repeated, and seems purposely done to make Instruction sit lighter

of the French in using the Pronouns *du*, *de-la*, *de*, *en*, and so forth. Observe too that you use the singular for the plural, and sometimes the plural for the singular. You will fall eternally into this Error, unless you will fix the Conjugations of Verbs in your Head. Pray examine the Translation by the Original, Word by Word, and study the Reasons of their Difference; by this Means, you shall become more a Mistress of the French in six Weeks, than you have been in all all your Time hitherto. The Leisure the Country affords, and the little Avocation you have there, afford an excellent Opportunity for this.

lighter on his Pupil, and coax her, rather than compel her, into Learning; and undoubtedly proves the Tutor's Knowledge of human Nature. See a Sketch of her Disposition given in the Notes on the last Letter.

Why do you ſay I ſet you long Taſks? I do not. I bid you take Time, and don't fatigue yourſelf. Perform them à deux, ou trois repriſes, or a combien vous le voulez; mais ayez garde de les faire tous jours ſoigneuſement.

I deſign to tranſlate, for your Uſe, the Hiſtory of *Nonchalante*, *Babellarde*, and *Finette*; not only for the ſake of the French, but for your Conduct in Life. They deſerve to be got by heart, and printed deep in your Memory; though they ſeem to be written only for young Children *, yet they contain a moſt excel-

* This is another Inſtance of the Tutor's Knowledge of human Nature; this little Compliment, thus judiciouſly thrown in, ſerves at once to encourage her, and to excite her farther Emulation; it is alſo a Proof that, whatever Book ſhe read, he always directed her Search towards the Moral.

lent

lent Moral. When you are going to do or ſay ſomething, that you are in doubt if it ought to be ſaid or done, conſider whether it will be like *Nonchalante*, or *Babellarde*, or *Finette*. But I am afraid that you will begin to think I am a *Babellarde*; ſo I conclude, in aſſuring you, that few People love you better, than, dear Nancy,

Your faithful Friend, J. P.

Faites mes Compliments à Madame, votre Tante.

London, July 24, 1739.

P. S. I don't wonder at the great Difference between your Tranſlation, and the Original in *Telemaque*, becauſe the Engliſh is ſo different from the Original; but you'll obſerve the real Faults. I herewith ſend another Teſt of your Abilities.

LETTER V.

Dear Nancy,

I Received yours of the 24th, which is worſe Writing than any of your former Letters. You don't point out the Place in *Telemaque*, from which you took the ſecond Tranſlation in yours; but I can ſcarcely read it. You have ſo ſtrong an Inclination to write the initial Letters of your Name ſmall, that you do it always to your Mama, and to me ſometimes; namely, in your laſt.

I obſerve, with Pleaſure, a good deal of the Genius, and true Turn of the French Language, in your Letters and Tranſlations; but you neglect the moſt common Things, namely, the Spelling, the

the Conſtruction, and Regimes des Verbes. Pray, dear Nancy, correct that; and learn to diſpoſe your Letter in a handſome Manner.

You tranſlate too much at a Time. Do a little at once, and do it well. Take more Care of your Writing, and learn to point.

I go to the Country this Afternoon, and return on Monday, when I expect to find one from you.

Vous etes trop empreſſée, ma Fille, d'ecrire beaucoup à la fois. Ecrivez moins, et avec plus de Soin. Faites mes Compliments à Madame votre Tante; et ſoyez perſuadé que

Je ſuis, votre fidelle Ami,

A Londres, ce 28, *de Juillet*, 1739. J. PRESTON.

P. S. Je vous envoyerai une Critique ſur votre derniere Lettre, dans la mienne de Lundi. Encore je ſuis à vous.

LETTER VI.

Dear Nancy,

I Have been out of Town ſince Saturday. At my Return, I got your Letter, but it is neither dated nor pointed. I am glad to find the Spirit of the French Language in your Letters and Tranſlations; and they grow better every Time you write; but, as I told you before, you neglect the Modes, Tenſes, Numbers, Conſtruction, and Regimen, which are, as it were, the very Rudiments of the Language. Then you write with ſo heavy a Hand, that one would think you

you rather uſed a Graving-iron, than a Pen.

I have ſent you, on the other Side of this Sheet, your Tranſlation of the laſt Taſk I ſet you, with the Original oppoſite to it. I would have you, my dear, conſider it, Word by Word, not only for the Grammar-Part, but likewiſe to learn the true Idiom of the French, and the Difference of that from the Engliſh. I ſhall only trouble you with one Example. *We* ſay, "He put his Affairs in good Order." The *French* ſay, "He put a good Order to his Affairs." You'll ſee, in your Tranſlation, you have followed the Engliſh Idiom *.

I ſhall

* Be it remembered, and allowed for, in the Midſt of all theſe Idioms, that Mr. P——, being

I ſhall continue this Subject in my next. In the mean time, I aſſure you that your Letters give me very great Pleaſure.

Adieu, ma chere Nannette!

Je ſuis votre, &c.

London,
Aug. 2, 1739. J. P.

P. S. I ſend you another Taſk, which I have tranſlated nearer to the French Idiom than the former, that it may be the eaſier run into French, when you undertake it.

Faites mes Compliments a Madame, votre Tante.

Encore, une fois, adieu!

ing a Scotchman, falls into many Idioms, even in his own Engliſh.

LET-

LETTER VII.

London, Aug. 4, 1739.

My dear Nancy,

MY laſt was by Thurſday's Poſt. I received yours Yeſterday, in which you excuſe the Faults of your Tranſlations, by pleading, that they are not committed through Careleſſneſs; but ſurely you don't look into your Grammar, elſe you would ſpell more correctly, and obſerve the Differences of the Numbers and Tenſes better.

Your Letters and Tranſlations give me great Pleaſure, there is ſomething ſo much of the French Turn in them.

They are only the moſt common Things which you overſee. You ſpell Engliſh

Engliſh as well as a Man of Learning does, and much better than the moſt Part of your Sex. I would have you as perfect at ſpelling French: I don't expect that your Tranſlations ſhould be equal to the Original. How can that be, when the Tranſlation that I ſend you, and which you are to render again into the Original, is ſo widely different from the Original itſelf? But then I would have you obſerve the Difference nicely, as it would make a laſting Impreſſion on your Mind. I would have you make ſome Paper up in different Folds; then write your own Phraſe on one Side, and the French Original on the other, if the Difference is worth noticing; for inſtance, in this Manner:

You

You ſay,	The Original,
Le ſoin de ſa famille lui chagrina le plus.	Ce que l'inquietoit le plus, c'etoit le ſoin de ſa famille.

Yours is not bad French, but then the other is better. If you'll take this Method, it will infix the moſt proper and elegant Expreſſion deep in your Mind.

I ſhall detain you no longer, having many Letters to write. I have encloſed another Paper than I uſed to ſend you, though it bears the ſame Name, becauſe it is more diverting than the former. I ſhall ſet you no Taſk to-day, for I would not chuſe to oppreſs you. I am juſt going to your Mama's, that, if ſhe thinks fit, ſhe may add a Poſtſcript.

The

The Weather is not more uncertain, than the Rumours we have of Peace and War.

Adieu! ma chere Nannette!

Je ſuis,

à vous, &c. &c.

J. P.

P. S. You ſhould add, now and then, a Poſtſcript to your Mother; for you ſhould not be guilty of ſo much as the Appearance of Neglect to her.

LETTER VIII.

London, Aug. 7. 1739.

Dear Nancy,

I Received yours of the 4th inſtant. I am charmed with the Tranſlation. It is the beſt you have done, and much better than I expected. It is impoſſible

that

that it can be ſo good French, as that of ſo great a Maſter as *Monſ. Perrault*; but, by ſetting them in Oppoſition, you ſee the Difference; and if you will mind it, and keep the Copies, that you may have recourſe to them on occaſion, I do not know a better Way to attain to the Purity of the French Language.

In your Letter you ſay, "La Conſideration de cela que vous *faite* pardonner, &c." inſtead of "que vous *fait* pardonner," and ſo on, in many Inſtances, uſing the Infinitive for the Imperfect of the Indicative Mood. "Ma Tante vous *faire* les Compliments," for vous *fait*." Theſe Miſtakes are ſo obvious, that nothing but Careleſſneſs * can make you fall into

* She has endeavoured to exculpate herſelf from the Charge of Careleſſneſs, yet here ſhe is again arraigned

them. Vous ne devez pas vous pleindre de peu de Capacité, parceque vous l'avez belle et bonne ; et vous en etes bien redevable à Dieu.

You ſhould carefully remark the principal Differences between the French and Engliſh Manner of Speech. This is what we call different *Dialects*. It is impoſſible to enumerate them, they are ſo many; but the greateſt ariſe out of theſe Particles *ou*, *en*, *di*, *deſ*, *de*, &c. When we would ſay, A thing is generally reported, we uſe this indefinite Expreſſion, "It is ſaid," or "They ſay." The

arraigned for it. Probably ſhe was unconſcious of it. She did not mean to be inattentive, and was only hurried on by early Warmth, and wiſhed, if poſſible, to attain the Eſſence of Learning, without the neceſſary Forms that lead to it. Such Inſtances are not uncommon.

French

French ſay, "On dit." We ſay "At that time." They ſay, "Du temps." We ſay, "*In Europe.*" They ſay, "*Of Europe.*" We ſay, "I have got a Fever." They ſay, "A Fever has taken me." Then the Uſe of *à* or *de* before the Infinitive is very hard to be diſtinguiſhed without great Care; as you will ſee by comparing the laſt Tranſlation with the Original. In like Manner, the Difference is difficult between *en* and *dans*; when the Adverb *ne* is to be uſed, and when not. We ſay, "He is richer than you think, &c." The French ſay, "He is richer than you don't think." Then we have an auxiliary Verb, which they want, and which adds great Force and Energy to our Expreſſion on ſome Occaſions; and that is the Verb *do*. When we aver a Thing

Thing with Vehemence, we ſay, "I *do* ſay ſo—I *do* think ſo." This is much ſtronger than to utter ſimply, "I ſay ſo—I think ſo." You may obſerve the Force of this auxiliary *do* in many other Expreſſions.

Nannette, adieu, juſqu'à Jeudi, et faites mes Compliments à Madame votre Tante.

J. P.

P. S. I ſhall defer ſending you your laſt Tranſlation, and *Perrault*'s Original, till Thurſday.

LETTER IX.

London, Aug. 9, 1739.

Dear Nancy,

ON the other Side you have your Tranſlation, and on the next, the Original. Pray mark the Difference; for

for though yours is much better than I expected, yet you'll find in the other a ſhorter Way of Expreſſion. My Tranſlation, which was impoſſible to be made literally from the French, has occaſioned a greater Difference between yours and the original French, than would have been otherwiſe. Beſides, though you ſometimes uſe Words different from the Author, that is nothing; your Words have the ſame Meaning.

You'll obſerve, you ſometimes miſtake the Gender. I ſhall only notice two Inſtances. *You* ſay, "Rien de ſi *indolente* qu'etoit *Nonchalante*." The *Author* ſays, Rien de ſi indolent; your Miſtake is, you think *indolent* agrees with *Nonchalante*, and therefore you put it in the Feminine Gender;

Gender; but it agrees with *rien* and ſo ſhould have been in the Maſculine.

The next thing is, you ſay, "Le même Longeur du Temps." This is a ſtiff Expreſſion, beſides it is an Angliciſm. *We* ſay, "The ſame Length of Time;" but the *French* ſay, "Aſſez long Temps." Moreover this Expreſſion is ſo natural and uſual, that I wonder you endeavoured to find out another.

I have no more Faults to find, only in the Spelling; but the Tranſlation is ſo well in the main, that I will ſend you ſome little Preſent for it.

I hope to hear from you to-morrow, how you like Baron *Tomliſon*'s Speech.*

* Inſerted in a Craftſman.

You

You have never acknowledged the Receipt of any of thoſe Papers.

Adieu, ma chere Nannette,

juſqu'à Samedy !

J. P.

LETTER X.

London, Aug. 14. 1739.

Dear Nancy,

I HAVE the Pleaſure of yours of the 11th inſtant; which is ſtill better than any of the former; only you forget to ſpell aright. You ſay, *Vous me traiter*, inſtead of *Vous me traitez*; *Ceci vous trouverai*, inſtead of *Ceci vous trouvera*. The French is exceeding well; but obſerve, you *write*, " J'ay receu chaque Papier vous m'avez envoyé." This

is an Angliciſm; for we ſay, "I have received every Paper you ſent me," inſtead of "every Paper *that* you ſent me," but the French do not; ſo it ſhould have been, "Chaque Papier *que* vous m'avez envoyé.

I have not been abroad ſince Saturday, being confined to the Houſe by a great Cold. I have ſent you, on the other Side, the reſt of *Babillarde*'s Character. I want to know how you do, and how you paſs your Time,* which you may write in Engliſh and at Length.

* Mr. Preſton, among his other Attentions to his favourite Scholar, uſed much to endeavour at impreſſing on her Mind an Idea of *the Value of Time*, and wiſhed her to be continually employed. Sports and Recreations he called Employments, in their turn, eſpecially when earned by Application to more ſerious Affairs; but *ſheer Idleneſs*, he uſed to ſay, in the Scottiſh Dialect, *tha human Mind ſhould think ſhame of.*

When

When I can go abroad, I ſhall remember what I promiſed. Your following Taſks ſhall be ſhorter than the former, that you may conſider them well, and not be hurried in point of Time. I am, with my hearty Service to your Aunt, ma chere Nannette,

à vous,

J. P

P. S. You'll obſerve that the Tranſlation herewith ſent is very near the French Idiom. This I did to make it more eaſy for you. When you return to Town, I would have you try to put theſe Tranſlations into more proper Engliſh. We come next to the Character of *Finnette*, which I ſhall divide into three ſmall Taſks, à fin que vous vous en acquittier à votre Aiſe, et avec Plaiſir.

LETTER XI.

London, Aug. 23, 1739.

Dear Nancy,

I HAVE the Pleaſure of yours of the 20th and ſhewed it to your Mama, who was writing to you in the mean Time, but I ſuppoſe her Letter don't reach you till this Night.

You certainly do not remark the Differences between the Original and your Tranſlation, or you would not fall ſo often into Faults which are ſo obvious. You frequently mix Subſtantives and Adjectives of different Genders together, and Nouns and Verbs of different Numbers. I have reproved you twice for that word *mis*, which you uſe both in the

the ſingular and plural Number, and yet you have it twice in the laſt Tranſlation.

I remarked to you formerly, that you uſed the perfect Time, when the imperfect was more proper; and if you had but compared the Original with your own Tranſlation, you would have found it, as I ſaid. You are to obſerve, as I told you before, when you ſpeak of a particular Thing done ſome time ago, you ſhould uſe the perfect: but when you ſpeak of a Thing uſually done, the imperfect. For Example:

" Elle mettoit l'Ordre dans la Maiſon du Roi." That is, ſhe *uſed* to do it. But when it is only a peculiar Action done *once* or at a *certain* Time,

" Elle mit l'Ordre," &c.

Obſerve alſo, that they do not uſe the Word *avec* in *France*, in ſo extenſive a Senſe, as we do *with* in *England*. What we tranſlate into *with* is ſometimes *à*, ſometimes *de* in French.* Remark too they ſay, *La Cadette de ces deux*, we ſay, " The youngeſt of the three." The Senſe is the ſame, though the Expreſſion is ſomewhat different; for *Cadette* ſignifies properly, one that is younger. *Le Cadet*, for Example, is *the younger Brother*,

* As the true Idiom of a Language is generally the laſt Point which is learned, and requires a greater Degree of Comprehenſion than is neceſſary for underſtanding a plain grammatical Rule, I hope this Paſſage will not be deemed too trifling to have been retained. It is poſſible that a young Mind might receive a deeper Impreſſion from meeting a Rule thus in the Courſe of a Letter, than in the formal Mode of Inſtruction.

whereas

whereas *Cadette* in this Place, implies *the Sister, who was younger than the other two.*

When they talk of any Thing that we learn they uſe *ſcavoir*, inſtead of *pouvoir*, as you may ſee in the Original, and it is worth your Obſervation.

I cannot ſay but the Tranſlation has the *true Spirit* of French in it; for this reaſon, it vexes me to ſee you fail in the commoneſt Things. I ſhall not trouble you with a new Exerciſe till Saturday, that you may conſider what I have remarked in this and my fomer Letters, with Care and Diligence.

Je ſuis

votre Ami,

J. P.

LETTER XII.

London, Aug. 28, 1739.

Dear Nancy,

I Have the Pleaſure of yours of the 26th. I have not yet ſeen your Mama; when I do, I ſhall deliver her your Letter.

I ſhall not diſpute your Care; but there is a wide Difference between taking Care, and taking due Care. We may exerciſe a great deal, but if it is not rightly conducted, it may be very unprofitable. If you would ſurvey your Verbs with Attention, you would not write

write *liſer* for *lire*, nor *ils etoit* for *ils etoient*. Theſe Errors would never happen, if you were as circumſpect as you ought to be. I do not expect that you ſhould fall upon the beſt Phraſes in the French Language; that is impoſſible; but when you compare the Originals with your Tranſlations, you ſhould do it with ſo much Accuracy, as to imprint the French Phraſes and Idioms ſtrongly on your Mind. Remember what I wrote to you about the Exerciſe * on the other Side; when you lay that and the Original together, you will have a good Opportunity to remark the different Uſe of the perfect and imperfect Tenſe.

* The Character of *Finette*.

I have got *Gil Blas* to divert you when you return to Town: if you are very anxious to ſee it, and are to ſtay ſome further Time in the Country, I will ſend it by the Coach.

I was far from well when I wrote laſt, and rather worſe on Sunday; but have been prevailed upon to take a Medicine, and am now much better.

They talk warmly of putting more Ships in Commiſſion, and raiſing additional Forces, as if there were to be an Invaſion, and the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender, French Tyranny and arbitrary Government, were all ready to burſt in upon us,

And

And at one Sup,
To eat us up,

as the Dragon of *Wantley* devoured the three poor Children. The anti-miniſterial People, however, ſay that all this Noiſe is only like crying, *boh!* to make a Child quiet; and that *the poor Children three*, are *England, Scotland*, and *Ireland*, whom they want to make lie quiet, till they tye them down in their Cradle, and rock them faſt aſleep. Don't you remember when I uſed to frighten you with the *Fox*, Nancy? This is juſt ſuch another Farce, if you will believe our *Patriots*, as they call themſelves. But we muſt not truſt them too far; for they are thought to be diſſatisfied, if not diſaffected, and ſome of them even ſuſpected

to be *Jacobites*—and love their Country notwithſtanding!—But how can that be?—Well, theſe Things are above our ordinary Capacities, and ſo we'll e'en let them alone.

Ne liſez vous quelquefois la Sainte Ecriture, *Nannette?* Il y a des Choſes très dignes de votre Attention, malgré tous ces Fous qui s'en mocquent.

Give my humble Service to your Aunt. Bon jour, Mademoiſelle!

LET-

LETTER XIII.

London, Sept. 1, 1739.

Dear Nancy,

YOU ſtill continue to uſe the ſingular Verb for the plural. Is not this Negligence in the higheſt Degree? Theſe little Faults apart, the Tranſlation is admirable, by far the beſt you ever made, and you improve in every one. I grant it is your Application to write fine French, that makes you neglect common Things; but then it looks ugly to ſee ſuch good French defective in the very firſt Principles, that a Beginner would be aſhamed of. I do not think *il cauſoit*, for *il faiſoit*, good French. Pray obſerve the Arrangement of the Original, and compare it with your Tranſlation. You ſay, *il fit l'In-*

l'Infidelité de cet Homme de retomber—They ſay, *il fit retomber l'Infidelité*, &c. Hence you may remark that they put as few Words as they can between the Infinitive and the Verb that governs it. After *faire* they never uſe the Particle; for Example, *je le ferai entrer*, and not *d'entrer*, or *à entrer*.

On the whole, your Tranſlation charms me; and the Faults are but like a little Mole or two on a fine Face. I ſhall give you but a very ſhort Taſk this Day.

I can promiſe you vaſt Pleaſure in the reading of *Gil Blas* *. It is both inſtructive and pleaſant, and very pretty French.

* It is worth obſerving how nicely Mr. Preſton ſlides in another Author, and lays it before his Pupil as if with a View to her Amuſement only. By this

French. I thought it might divert you now and then in bad Weather.

I commend you much for accuſtoming yourſelf to read the Pſalms and Chapters for the Day. As the Pſalms are a Piece of the fineſt Poetry in the World, as well as of the moſt divine and exalted Devotion, and as you have a Taſte for Poetry *, and, like every body who has a Taſte, muſt have ſome preferable Paſſages

this Means, Inſtruction wears the Face of Kindneſs, and while he fixes her Attention on the Pleaſure of the Story, and the Utility of the Precept, he inſenſibly advances her in the Knowledge of the Language.

* How admirably does this excellent Man lead her to a Love of Religion! and while he flatters her Vanity in allowing her to have a Taſte for the great Beauties of the divine Poetry, he at once excites an Attention which is moſt likely to awaken, or

ſages in all Authors, I ſhould be glad to know which are your favourite Pſalms. I will acquaint you afterward which were mine when I was about your Age, and which remain ſo ſtill.

J. P.

LETTER XIV.

London, Sept. 8, 1739.

Dear Nancy,

I Have the Pleaſure of yours of the 6th inſtant. Your Tranſlation is admirable. It outdoes all your former Out-

or even form that Taſte, and obliges her to employ ſo much more Time, that the Principles of Piety may take Root; which, by a curſory Reading, might make but little Impreſſion on ſo young a Mind.

doings,

doings, as our *Laureat* ſays.* There are only two Things ſcored, which you'll correct yourſelf, ſo I ſhall not ſpeak of them.

I give you till this Day Se'nnight to tranſlate the Exerciſe I now ſend. I have preſerved the French Air and Idiom as much as I could, to lead you by the Hand, as it were, to tranſlate it well.

Madame votre Mere ſe porte paſſablement bien; Madame M—, elle et moi nous dinames enſemble hier chez elle. Madame M— vous faite bien de Compliments. Le Temps commence d'etre un peu rude; ne ſerez vous pas de Retour *bien-tot?* Tout le Monde de votre Connoiſance a grande Envie de vous revoir.

* Colley Cibber Eſq;

You

You cannot imagine, my dear Nancy, what Pleaſure your Choice of the Pſalms gives me: they are, every one, my own Favourites; every one, without Exception. But then I had ſome more; ſuch as the 8, 19, 23, 29, 30, 34, 36, 42, 63, 65, 107, 139. but eſpecially the 8, 23, 34, 139. The 16th is alſo a fine Pſalm; but I would have you read them in the Bible, and not in our Prayer-Book. The Stile is much nobler in the Bible, that Tranſlation being far better than the other.

The Book of *Eccleſiaſtes* is the propereſt Book I know to be read, for making a true Judgment and Eſtimate of human Life, and the Things of the World; and the Book of *Proverbs*, and the Wiſdom

of

of *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach*, in the *Apocrypha*, contain the wiſeſt Precepts for the Conduct of private Life *.

I am, my dear Nancy,

yours,

J. P.

LETTER XV.

Dear Nancy,

THIS is chiefly to cover the encloſed from your Mama. I am afraid you are ill, that you have not wrote to me theſe two Poſts; but perhaps you have been buſy, or viſiting, or diverted with

* We may obſerve in this Place, and indeed throughout theſe Letters, how ſtrongly Mr. Preſton inculcates the Maxim, that a fervent Piety is the neceſſary and indiſpenſable Qualification of a wiſe, well-lettered, and a poliſhed Mind.

Com-

Company. However that may be, I ſhall be uneaſy, if I don't hear from you to-morrow.

Hier, au grand Matin, *Don Thomas Giraldino*, l'Ambaſſadeur *d'Eſpagne*, partit pour retourner chez lui; etant rappellé par le Roy, ſon Maitre; et ainſi il y a d'Apparence d'une Guerre entre les deux Couronnes. On dit que le Siege de *Belgrade* vient de ſe lever; mais cette derniere Nouvelle merite Confirmation. Voila tout ce que nous avons de nouveau aujourd'hui.

Je ſuis à vous, ma chere Filleule! Mes Compliments à Madame votre Tante.

A Londres, ce 16, *de Sept.* 1739. J. P.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

Oxford, July 18, 1742 *.

Dear Nancy,

NOthing has happened, ſince I ſaw you, worth writing. We ſet out yeſterday Morning at a Quarter after four, and arrived here this Evening at a Quarter before eight, heartily weary of the Stage-Coach, as moſt People are.

I was at Church this Forenoon, and heard a Sermon preached before the Heads of the Univerſity.

I hope

* There has not been any Loſs of the Tutor's Letters to occaſion this great Chaſm in the Dates. He was in Town with his Pupil, and the Inſtruction was carried on in Perſon. During this Interval, he grounded her in Engliſh and French, and made her acquainted with ſuch eaſy Writings, as

I hope you will continue to tranſlate, and be ſtrict to the ſame; but you muſt take ſome Liberty in the Expreſſion, becauſe the Idioms of the two Languages will not admit of a literal Tranſlation; you muſt therefore follow Horace's Advice,

Not Word for Word too faithfully tranſlate.

In my next I ſhall begin to make Obſervations upon Virgil, Homer, Milton, or any other Author you ſhall think fit to mention to me: for we may vary our Subject occaſionally, and derive Advantage from it. Whatſoever Book you

as he judged neceſſary to train her Mind to a Knowledge of higher Authors. How far ſhe profited, may be ſeen from thoſe which he propoſes for the Subjects of their Letters, in this Renewal of their Correſpondence.

are

are engaged in, if there be any Point on which you may wiſh to have my Opinion, I hope you will apply without Reſerve; and be aſſured, I ſhall always gratify myſelf when I can oblige you.

I give my humble Service to your Mother and Aunt, and am,

my dear Nancy,

your ſincere Friend,

and Servant,

J. P.

LETTER XVII.

Oxon. Sept. 1, 1742.

Dear Nancy,

I Received your Letter yeſternight, and am charmed with it. It is written with Senſe and Spirit, and in an eaſy familiar

milair Stile, as all Letters ſhould be written. The Writing too is good, the Lines ſtrait, and the Paper kept free from Blurs or Blots. Theſe Particulars give me Pleaſure. Pray perſevere in this Care and Attention. Good Habits are full as eaſy to be attained and preſerved as bad ones. The only Point is to ſet out in a right Way at firſt, and enter upon it with Determination.

I would have you, by all Means, purchaſe the *Archbiſhop of Cambray's Dialogues des Morts*, with the Fables and Lives of the antient Philoſophers: they are all bound up together in one Volume. It is an excellent Book; and though one would think that you, a young Girl, ſhould have little to do with the Lives of

of old Philoſophers, yet you cannot fail of finding many Things, which will be of vaſt Advantage to you, if you duly obſerve them. You will perceive that even the greateſt Men were ſubject to groſs Failings and Follies; but the main Points to claim your Obſervation, are thoſe wiſe Rules and Maxims that were eſtabliſhed among them, ſome by one, ſome by another, and the ſalutary Obſervations they made of Men and Things. Theſe, if you conſider them, will be of great Service to you in the Conduct of Life.

I would have you, my Dear, to read often the Proverbs of *Solomon*, the *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Eccleſiaſticus*, and the *Wiſdom of the Son of Sirach*. There are few Books, which I know, fit to be compared

with them for Inſtructions to make us wiſe and happy.

I would likewiſe recommend to you the 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th Satires of *Juvenal*, and the 2d of *Perſius*; and that you would think well and often on them.

Preſerve ſtill that Goodneſs and Sweetneſs of Temper, of which you are ſo much Miſtreſs; and that Modeſty, Humility, and Freedom from Affectation, Pride, and Vanity, which, without Flattery, are ſo remarkable in you. Perſevere unceaſingly in Affection and Obedience to your Mother, in Kindneſs and Compaſſion to your Fellow-Creatures, and, above all, in the Fear and Love of God; there will

will be then no Danger but that you will find People who will love and eſteem you, nay, very probably, even pique themſelves on ſerving you, and be proud to be thought your Friends and Benefactors.

Let me hear from you often, my Dear: write freely. Let me always know what you are about, and what happens to you. I long to hear that you are gone into the Country, leſt you ſhould not be in Time to ſee Mrs. F— before ſhe leaves it. She is a moſt deſerving Woman, and I could wiſh to make you acquainted with her. An Intimacy with a Perſon of real Merit, is one great Bleſſing of Life: they who live longeſt perceive this moſt. Inform me when you ſet out,

and I will ſend you a Letter of Introduction.

There is a little Book, called the *Duke of Rochefoucault*'s Maxims, full of excellent Obſervations on the World and human Life. I would have you procure this little Treatiſe, either in French or Engliſh, as you can beſt meet with it.

Adieu, ma chere, for this Time. My kind Service to your Mother and Aunt.

I am,

your faithful Friend,

J. PRESTON.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Oxford, Sept. 9, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

AS ſoon as this comes to your Hand, pray carry the encloſed Letter. The Gentleman, to whom it is addreſſed, and his Wife, paſſed through this Place the Day before yeſterday. She will be glad to ſee you: ſhe talked very kindly of you, and ſaid ſhe had heard a great Character of you.

She is a Perſon of much Worth and good Senſe. If you converſe with her freely and naturally, like yourſelf, without Oſtentation or Affectation, you cannot miſs to pleaſe her.

I have heard ſome of your Acquaintance complain that you are too baſhful—regard not that—your Modeſty becomes you. Be not too preſſing to gain Applauſe. If you go on in your own Way, it will come to you uncourted; and Love and Eſteem will come along with it. Endeavour to merit it, and the more indifferent you ſeem about it, the more certain you are to acquire it.

I have a long Letter for you ſoon, ſo I ſhall ſay no more now, but adieu, ma très chere.

Je ſuis tout à vous,

J. P.

P. S. My humble Service to your Mother and Aunt. Adieu, encore, my little dear.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

Oxford, Sept. 17, 1742.

My dear,

I Have your agreeable Letter of the 14th inſtant, and would have anſwered it before, but that I have been engaged lately in a little Buſineſs, which has prevented my writing to you ſo often as I intended.

You want to have long Letters from me; I want the ſame Thing from you. I wiſh you had been particular about your Viſit to Mr. and Mrs. F—, and that you had let me know the Subject your Converſation turned upon. You don't tell me if Mr. W— has ſent the *Arch-*

biſhop of Cambray's Book, nor what you think of *Rochefoucault*'s Maxims; but as you are deeply engaged in *Homer*, I can eaſily excuſe that.

There are infinite Beauties in *Homer*; and though all Tranſlations muſt, in ſome Reſpects, fall ſhort of ſo great an Original, yet I think Mr. *Pope* preſerves the Life and Soul, and Fire of it, in a great Degree. There is not ſuch a vaſt Warmth and Ardour in *Virgil*, but then there is ſuch a Beauty, and, I may ſay, Lovelineſs in him, as paſſes all Deſcription; nor is it poſſible for the Heart of a Reader, who is ignorant of this Original, to form any Manner of Idea of it. When you read *Pope*'s Tranſlation, you read ſomething like *Homer* himſelf; but when

when you read *Dryden*'s Tranſlation of *Virgil*, you can ſcarce have any Notion or Image of his genuine Excellencies. No Painter ever gave more fine and lively Expreſſion to a Picture, or with more Exactneſs and Judgment, than *Virgil* gives to his Deſcriptions. Nay, if you ſaw the Thing itſelf repreſented before you, it would ſcarcely make a deeper Impreſſion. Yet I do not hereby preſume to aver that *Dryden* was a Poet inferior to *Pope*, but he was old, and not *à ſon Aiſe*, when he tranſlated *Virgil*. A bet-Excuſe however may be brought for him; namely, that neither our Language, nor (to my Belief) any other Language in the World, can come up to the Beauty, Elegance and Energy of the matchleſs Original.

Though no one can read *Homer*, who has any (though ever ſo little) Elevation of Fancy, without being charmed with him, yet if we are let into his great Deſign, the Structure and Contrivance of his Fable, the Plot, Conduct, and Execution of the Whole, with what the Criticks call the Characters, the Sentiments, Diction, Figures, Deſcriptions, &c. I ſay, when theſe Things are duly known, we ſhall have a much greater Pleaſure in reading him, than otherwiſe we can poſſibly attain.

If you will read *Pope*'s Introduction to the *Iliad*, with Care, it will prove of great Uſe to you. You ſhould alſo make yourſelf acquainted with his Notes; but in order to have a juſt Conception of this

Stile

Stile of Writing. it is neceſſary to pay great Attention to *Boſſu*'s Treatiſe of Epick Poetry. It is commended as the moſt judicious Eſſay on that Subject, that ever was written; and, though it be of little Uſe to us, till we are ſomewhat acquainted with Epick Poetry, yet, once dipped into that excellent Way of Writing, it is of infinite Service to give us a true Taſte for it. We ſhould experience the Advantage of it, in a high Degree, through the *Iliad*, the *Odyſſey*, the *Æneid*, and *Paradiſe Loſt*. Many other Epick Poems are written, which perhaps may as well be let alone as read. I except ſome proſe Performances, ſuch as *Telemaque*. *Taſſo*'s *Jeruſalem delivered* has been recommended to me

well worth reading: it was originally written in Italian*. There is, however, I am told, an old Tranſlation of it into Engliſh, by *Edward Fairfax*, which I am going to read forthwith. A Friend, on whoſe Taſte and Judgment I can depend, aſſures me it is an admirable Work, abounding with exquiſite Poetry, and all the Spirit of an Original. *Statius*, who certainly had a great poetic Genius, wrote an Heroic Poem in Latin, called the *Thebaid*; but it falls ſo infinitely ſhort of *Virgil* in ſome Particulars, and

* I am apt to think Mr. *Preſton* was not ſingular in having lived many Years ignorant of this beautiful Production. Within the ſmall Circle of my Acquaintance, I have been amazed, on quoting *Taſſo's Jeruſalem*, to find ſeveral Perſons of exquiſite Taſte, and Lovers of reading, utter Strangers to the very Name. It is ſurely an admirable Poem, and ſhould be univerſally known.

perhaps

perhaps in *all* (except in his Fire, of which *Statius* had a large Portion) that his Poem and *Virgil*'s are often oppoſed to each other in *Boſſu*, by way of contraſt; ſo that you may there ſee cloſe and nice Examples of Judicioufneſs and Injudicioufneſs, Beauties and Defects. It might be of great Advantage to you, to have *Statius* and *Virgil* before you, when you read *Boſſu*, that you might immediately conſult the Originals, when any remarkable Quotation is made. There is ſome Part of the *Thebaid* tranſlated by Mr. *Pope*, but I do not know if the whole is rendered into Engliſh by any Hand. Now if you are inclined to read *Boſſu*, I will ſend it to you.

There

There are ſome noble Beauties in *Homer* and *Virgil*, which I have, with great Accuracy, obſerved. Perhaps the chief of them may have been noticed by other People; however as they are *my own*, and not borrowed from, though they may reſemble, others, I flatter myſelf they may not be unwelcome to you.

To begin with *Homer*. We are to conſider in the firſt Place, what was his Deſign or End in writing an Heroick Poem, abſtracted entirely from the Tendency of the Work.

The End this Poet propoſed to himſelf, perhaps, was to procure Praiſe, perhaps, Profit. The latter has been too often the Caſe of Poets, and if the Tradition be true,

true, that *Homer* was blind and poor; it might have been the ſame with him. *Horace* ingenuouſly confeſſes of himſelf,

" *Paupertas impulit audax*
" *Ut Verſus facerem*"——to wit,
" *Poverty, which is impudent, compelled me*
" *to write Verſes.*"

Yet when we conſider the Sublimity, and almoſt Divinity of *Homer*'s Writings, we are ſurely tempted to think that he was not poor; if he was, how much is he to be admired and revered, who ſcorned to ſtoop to low diſgraceful Subjects, by which, however, he might poſſibly have obtained an eaſier and more plentiful Subſiſtence, than by producing ſuch a laborious, ſublime and uſeful Work!

It is probable that the *Æneid* was wrote with a Deſign to compliment *Auguſtus Cæſar*,

Cæſar, and procure his Favour. Allowing this, I cannot but think that *Virgil* pleaſed himſelf, at the ſame Time, with the Beauty and Lovelineſs of the Characters and Deſcriptions he gave us; and in the Reflection of having endeavoured to make Mankind better, by repreſenting the Excellence of Virtue, and Deteſtability * of Vice, in their diſtinct Colours.

You perceive hereby that we are to diſtinguiſh between the End an Author propoſes

* I believe this is a Word of Mr. *Preſtat*'s own Coining, but the Strength and Application of it appeared to me to carry the Apology with them. It cannot be objectionable, I preſume, to any but a Caviller. A liberal Judge ſcorns, on every ſlight Occaſion, to make a cold Appeal to a Dictionary. Not but, in my humble Opinion, the Word, though not to be found, is very juſtifiable in grammatical Propriety. We have *Placability*, as well as *placable*, and why not *Deteſtability*, as well

propoſes to himſelf by his Work, and that which he propoſes to the World. The general Deſign and Tendency may be equally to amuſe and improve Mankind; the particular Tendency, to inculcate ſome uſeful Truth in the Minds of thoſe Perſons, for whom the Work was chiefly written.

Virgil founds his Subject on the Actions and Sufferings of *Æneas*, from the Deſtruction of *Troy*, till he ſettled a new Empire in *Italy*; and the Leſſon, to be deduced from it, ſeems to be, the great Efficacy of a due Mixture of active and

well as *deteſtable*? And are not ſuch Liberties (ſo long as they do not contradict Reaſon and Probability) not only allowable, but Praiſe-worthy, in-as-much as they contribute to enlarge and enrich our Language?

paſſive

paſſive Virtues. His *Æneas* is wiſe, juſt, pious, valiant, good-natured, patient, and firm to his Purpoſe. Theſe Virtues carry him, at laſt, through all his Difficulties; but his Patience and Piety, ſeem moſt important to him. This is nicely judicious in the Author, to make the Hero owe his Happineſs to his unrepining Endurance of Hardſhips, his implicit Submiſſion to the Will of Heaven, and his pious Affection for his Father, his Son, his Friends, and his People; hence he is beloved of them all; and we find, notwithſtanding his long Sufferings, he was the peculiar Care of Heaven.

Man is not a faultleſs Being. *Virgil* therefore did not chuſe to draw his Hero out of Nature. He has deſcribed him with the Imperfections of a human Being.

ing. He is very culpable in his Behaviour to *Dido*. This is his great Fault; but you ſee, the Author has judiciouſly attributed that to him, which the greateſt of Men are liable to, and the beſt of Men ſometimes fall into. *Æneas* however acted not half ſo bad a Part by *Dido*, as *David* did with reſpect to *Bathſheba* and *Uriah*; and yet you ſee, it coſt *Æneas* very dear, and it was not without great Grief and Anguiſh of Heart, that he extricated himſelf at laſt. Suppoſing the Story to be true, a Man of ſo much Goodneſs of Diſpoſition as *Æneas*, muſt have had many bitter Reflections, during the whole Courſe of his Life, for his Behaviour at *Carthage*, and the fatal Event which attended it.

Dido ſtands a great Example to all Ages of the Danger and Ruin a Woman

of

of Virtue expoſes herſelf to, who ventures to give way, though ever ſo ſlightly, to the firſt Advances towards illicit Love. To your Sex ſhe ſhould be a perpetual Warning. It is worth your while to ſet the Picture before you. We will forget the *Queen*, and conſider her as mere Woman. We find her ſtruggle with her Inclination, at firſt, and even ſwear againſt giving way to her Paſſion; yet ſhe liſtened with Pleaſure to every thing *Æneas* ſaid. By Degrees ſhe is overcome. She then throws off all Reſerve and Shame; neglects her Affairs, gadds about with him from Place to Place, throwing aſide all the Decorum of her Sex and Situation; rides and hunts with him. At length, poor Woman! ſhe finds he is going to forſake her.

She

She ſtorms and threatens, weeps, and intreats by Fits; now ſends a reſentful, now a ſubmiſſive Meſſage. He anſwers all with Reſpect and Good-manners, but at the ſame Time, with Coldneſs and Indifference. This Treatment fills her with Agony unſpeakable. Reſt and Sleep are utter Strangers to her. At length, he departs from *Carthage*; then ſhe becomes diſtracted, expoſes herſelf to the whole City, execrates herſelf for not having deſtroyed him, his Son and herſelf; ſhe then ſinks again into Complaints and Lamentations, till ſhe is loſt in Deſpair, and reſolves to ſacrifice her Life. Poſſeſſed with this horrid Determination, ſhe becomes outrageous, and flies through her Apartments with the Looks and Fury

of

of a Fiend, devoting him and his Poſterity to endleſs Torments. The Preſents he had made her then meet her Eyes; ſhe diſſolves into Tears at the Sight, and moans, in painful Recollection, over the happy Hours ſhe had paſſed with him. Unable longer to endure the Variety of Torments that ſurround her, ſhe ſlays herſelf with a Sword, which had belonged to the Author of them, and in the Agonies of Death throws herſelf on the rich Apparel he had left behind him. Be it not forgot that, in this Act of Deſpair, ſhe placed the Picture* of her Lover on the funeral Pile. Thus,

* It is remarkable, that in ſome capital Paintings of the Death of *Dido*, this very natural and ſtriking Circumſtance of the Picture is omitted by the Artiſts.

notwith-

notwithſtanding all her Rage and Reſentment, Love held the largeſt Dominion over her Mind, and poſſeſſed her to the laſt.

Collect the whole, and meditate well upon it. It nearly behoves you, and every one of your Sex ſo to do; for be aſſured, my dear Nancy, every looſe Betrayer is pictured in *Æneas*, and every ſeduced Woman in *Dido*. From the Days of *Virgil* to this preſent Hour, the Betrayer will abandon the Victim of his unwarrantable Paſſion, and the Victim will ſink under Miſery and Deſpair; and ſuch muſt be the End of every licentious Amour: yet your unhappy Sex will not take Warning, though all Ages and Hiſtorians unite to prove the fatal Truth.

I have

I have given you a very long Letter; the Story of *Dido* led me ſo far beyond what I propoſed: but as it was done with a view to your future Safety and Well-doing, I hope you will not think I have ſaid too much; but will treaſure up in your Remembrance this cautionary Admonition of,

your very ſincere Friend

J. P.

LETTER XX.

Oxon, Sept. 22, 1742.

Dear Nancy,

THE Beauties, and various Incidents in the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*, engaged me ſo cloſely, as to make me poſtpone

poſtpone what I ſhould before have obſerved, namely the Tendency of this moſt noble Poem. I now come to it.

Near the Beginning of the firſt Book, *Virgil* makes this Reflection, "So great a Taſk was it to found the Roman Empire *." From which I am of Opinion that the immediate and particular Deſign of his Work was to imprint on the Minds of the *Romans*, his Countrymen, a great Eſteem for themſelves, a paſſionate Love for their Country, and a becom-

* "Tantæ Molis erat Romanam condere Gentem;"

So it runs in the Original, and in *Dryden*;

Such Time, ſuch Toil requir'd the Roman Name,
Such Length of Labour for ſo vaſt a Frame.

ing Piety and Gratitude towards the Gods; thoſe Gods, who had fought for them, who had led them through ſo many Dangers and Difficulties, and, after ſuch ſevere Encounters with other Nations, and even with ſome of the Deities themſelves who were Enemies to the *Trojans*, had, at laſt, ſettled them in that fine Country of *Italy*, and from ſmall Beginnings had enabled them to grow up to ſuch a Height as perhaps the World had never ſeen before, nor ever ſhall again.

If this was *Virgil*'s Deſign (and ſurely it is very probable) how agreeable is it to what we find in holy Writ! *Jacob* ſays,

"I have

" I have paſſed over this Brook with " my Staff, and now I am become two " Bands."

Moſes tells the Iſraelites, that they were the feweſt of all People, and God had made them a mighty and a ſtrong Nation. This is in order to excite in them Gratitude and Piety. *David*, in a hundred Places, mentions the Aſſiſtance of God, whereby, from a low and deſpicable Eſtate, he was become great and mighty.

" I am poor and needy, but the Lord " careth for me."

" He teacheth my Hands to fight."

" A Bow of Braſs is broken by my " Arms."

to make it always ſo. This would have been contradictory to Experience, and even his own Maxims; for he frequently gives us plain Intimations, that it often pleaſes Providence to do, and bring about Things, which we cannot account for. You may remember, for Inſtance, that at the Burning of *Troy*, *Æneas* loſt his wife, *Creuſa*, in the Confuſion. He returned, and went again through all his Dangers, in queſt of her. At laſt, ſhe *appears* to him, and deſires him to employ no more Sollicitude about her, for he was never to ſee her again. She adds, that ſuch Things do not happen but by the Will and Ordination of Heaven; intimating that it was the great Mother of the Gods, who had detained her in thoſe Parts, purpoſely that ſhe might not

be

be enſlaved by the Greeks. Laſtly, ſhe recommends, with great Earneſtneſs, their Son *Aſcanius* to his Care, the common Pledge of their Love. Now, to aſk why a virtuous affectionate Couple ſhould be ſo dreadfully ſeparated, and why *Creuſa* ſhould periſh in *Troy*, who had not deſerved it by any Crime, were to aſk a preſumptuous and an impious Queſtion, allowing the Story to be true. It was undoubtedly to anſwer ſome great and better Purpoſe, intentionally concealed from our weak Judgments; and this is the Leſſon, which *Virgil* means to give us. *Creuſa*'s tender Concern for her Child is moſt affectingly natural, and the Reality has been verified in the Deathbed Farewel of many worthy Wives.

Will you permit me to digreſs one Moment, to mark to you a Beauty of this Kind in our great dramatic Bard, our *Shakeſpeare?* In the third Act of *Hamlet*, when the *Ghoſt* appears to the Prince and his Mother in the Cloſet, "to whet his almoſt-blunted Purpoſe," he ſuddenly breaks from that, to a tender Concern and Compaſſion for the Queen's Situation.

But ſee, Amazement on thy Mother ſits,
O ſtep between her, and her fighting Soul;
Conceit in weakeſt Bodies ſtrongeſt works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

This Solicitude for the Sufferings of one, who in Life was dear, ſurviving the Grave, is moſt inexpreſſibly beautiful.

To

To return to *Virgil*: don't you think, Nancy, that if he had lived ſince Popery came into the World, the Roman Catholics would have ſaid that the Mother of the Gods detaining *Creuſa*, meant that the *Virgin Mary* had taken her into her eſpecial Service?

Whenever this Author makes virtuous Perſons ſuffer, it is neceſſary that you ſhould obſerve, he makes them guilty of ſome Fault, which naturally brings on their Diſtreſſes; and it is to ſuch Fault you muſt attribute them, abſtractedly from their good Qualities. I ſhall give you a ſhort Inſtance or two.

The hopeful, the beautiful, the virtuous *Pallas*, was killed untimely, in

the very Bloom of his Youth; ſo was the charming young *Euryalus*, the only Joy of his Mother, as the other was the only Hope of his Father. *Laufus* met alſo the ſame Deſtiny, the worthy Son of an unworthy Father.

Now while you pity them, conſider they were all three too raſh. The Heat of Youth carried them beyond the Bounds of Prudence: they all loved their Parents, and were beloved by them with great Tenderneſs; but that Heat and Impetuoſity rendered them diſobedient. *Pallas*'s Eagerneſs made him *break his Promiſe* to his Father. The Caſe was much the ſame with *Laufus*; after he had ſaved his Father's Life, his Eagerneſs prevented his attending him, though often and often ſent for. *Euryalus* under-

took

took an Exploit above his Years, and that without taking Leave of an affectionate Mother. Much is to be learned from theſe Examples; for though *Virgil* does not expreſſly ſay, they ſuffered on theſe Accounts, yet he plainly inſinuates it. Again, the impious Father of *Lauſus* is forced to confeſs that his Wickedneſs was the original Cauſe of his Son's Loſs, and owns it to be a juſt Judgment on him.

By theſe Examples *Virgil* teaches us how dangerous it is to fail in a Point of Duty to Parents, albeit through the mere Frailty of our Nature, and neither out of Contempt nor Stubbornneſs of Temper.

Adieu, my dear.

J. P.

LETTER XXI.

Oxon. Sept. 23, 1742.

My dear,

THE infinite Beauties of *Virgil* have carried me ſo much farther than I intended, that, if I can prevail upon myſelf, I ſhall contract what I have to ſay further on this Subject into a narrow Compaſs; though there are ſo many Charms in this glorious Poem, that I ſcarce know how to quit it.

To point out all the Excellencies of the *Æneid*, it would be neceſſary to repeat the whole Poem. I will therefore only touch on ſome of thoſe Paſſages which

which please me most, and are, what I judge, the chief Beauties.

In the first Book, we may remark his meeting with his Mother under the Figure of a Huntress, his going to *Carthage*, the Reception which the Queen gave him, and her becoming enamoured of him; and the Artifice which *Venus* used for that Purpose.

The Story of *Sinon*, in the second Book, the Return of *Æneas* to seek his Wife, his Interview and Conversation with her Spirit, and the affectionate Care and Anxiety he testified for his Father, his Son and whole Family, are very affecting.

How striking are his Adventures and Distresses through the whole third Book,

but

but particularly his Encounter with *Helenus* and *Andromache!* How natural was all that happened on that Event! The Story of *Achæmenides*, the *Cyclopes*, and the Deſcription of *Ætna!*

In the fourth Book, the whole Proceſs of the Loves of *Æneas* and *Dido*, with their fatal Conſequences, are beyond all Parallel, all Power of Imitation.

In the fifth, the funeral Games are introduced in Honour of *Anchiſes*, particularly the Mock-fight of the Children, called Ludus Trojanus. Theſe are followed by the burning of the Ships and Behaviour of the Matrons.

The

The whole ſixth Book is inexpreſſibly fine; his meeting with *Dido*, and their mutual Behaviour thereon; his encountering *Deiphobus* and his Father, and having the Ghoſts of his Poſterity ſhewn him, are all moſt awefully affecting. *Shakeſpeare* ſeems to have imitated this laſt Circumſtance in his *Macbeth*.

How well does he deſcribe the Joys of Heaven and Hell, and what Sort of Inhabitants are to be found in each Place! The chief in Heaven are thoſe, who have ſuffered Wounds and Death for their Country; Prieſts who have lived a holy Life, becoming their Profeſſion; and Bards who have written and ſung in pious Strains, not unworthy of the Gods;

Gods; intimating, that thoſe who proſtitute ſuch ſublime Talents to mean and vitious Purpoſes, deſerve not the Care of Heaven. Next in Degree to theſe are Perſons who have employed their Life in Arts and Inventions, for the Benefit of Mankind, and ſuch as have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by doing good.

In the other State, he allots the greateſt Share of Miſery to thoſe, who, when alive, hated their Brethren. Herein the Writer agrees exactly with what our *Saviour* ſaid to *Peter* about forgiving his Brother, and what is likewiſe inculcated in many other Parts of Scripture. *St. John* ſays,

"He

"He that ſayeth he loveth God, and "hateth his Brother, is a Lyar, and the "Truth is not in him."

We next behold thoſe who have rejected their Parents, defrauded their Dependants, and deceived ſuch as confided in them; after which come thoſe who have ſate brooding over their Gold, and refuſed to ſhare it with the needy; thoſe who have ſold their Country for mercenary Ends, have wreſted the Laws, and deſtroyed the Conſtitution; and thoſe who have dared to be guilty of Adultery or Inceſt. To what noble Purpoſes, my dear Nancy, does this viſionary Scene conduce! How admirably has *Virgil*'s Fancy and Morality gone Hand in Hand!

Do

Do you not admire that charming Deſcription, in the ſeventh Book, of the different Nations who came as Allies to the War, which was impending? Their Behaviour, Habits, Arms, Cuſtoms, how infinitely entertaining! and particularly, the charming Picture of *Camilla*, the female Warrior, and her Troop of Ladies.

The great Events in the enſuing Part of the Work are, *Æneas*'s Viſit to *Evander*, the Converſation and Conſequences, the ſimple Way of Life purſued by that old Prince, the Story of *Cacus*, and that of *Niſus* and *Euryalus*, the Praiſes of *Hercules*, the Speeches of *Turnus* and *Drances*, and the Deaths of *Pallas*, *Camilla*, and *Lauſus*. What noble Fire and Spirit does he diſplay, when he deſcribes the Conflict

Conflict between *Æneas* and *Turnus!* and how ſublime are the Sentiments of the latter, when he diſcovers that he had been purſuing a Spectre, inſtead of *Æneas*, and again, when he is about to expire. Theſe, my dear Nancy, are ſuch great and beautiful Paſſages, as appear to riſe in your Eſtimation, the more you conſider, and the oftner you peruſe them.

It is worth your while alſo to obſerve how humane a Man, and how fine a Gentleman, *Virgil* appears throughout his whole Work. With what Pleaſure does he dwell on Inſtances of Piety, paternal Love, filial Duty, conjugal Affection, Humanity, Hoſpitality, and every ſocial Virtue! With what apparent Delight

light does he ſpeak of a lovely Child, or a promiſing Youth! We ſee Inſtances of this in his *Aſcanius*, *Aſtyanax*, *Euryalus*, *Pallas*, and *Lauſus*.

He ſeems to deſcribe, with no leſs Participation of Joy, Examples of fond tender Parents, in *Æneas*, *Evander*, *Creuſa*, *Andromache*, *Amata*, and the Mother of *Euryalus*. He inſtructs us in the Knowledge of human Nature, (wherein he was deeply ſkilled) by painting the Love and Concern for a worthy Son, in the ſavage and impious Mind of *Mezentius*. We may hence derive ſome very important Truths and Leſſons. We learn firſt that Love to our Children is ſo inherent, that Perſons who acknowledge no other Claim, who feel no other Call of Nature,

ture, and who are actually guilty of great Faults, in other Reſpects, ſtill preſerve their Duty and Affection here. We learn beſide that Worth and Goodneſs will always be beloved and admired, and extort ſome Degree of Approbation, even from the moſt unfeeling Heart. Had the Son of *Mezentius* been leſs deſerving, probably his Father would not have mourned his Loſs to ſuch Exceſs; *Æneas* not ſo ſtrongly regretted having killed him; nor would *Virgil* have bewailed him in ſuch Terms, as (to uſe the Expreſſion of *Horace*) "were worth his dying for." He loſt his Life through his Exceſs of Virtue; he was alarmed with Grief and Fear at Sight of his Father's Danger, ruſhed between him and *Æneas*, and preſerved his Parent. By this

this we are taught another uſeful Truth; namely, that no Fault of a Parent can ſuperſede the Duty of a Child. He might have eſcaped, after he had preſerved his Father; but Raſhneſs, ſo incident to Youth, drove him to venture beyond his Strength. *Æneas* fore-warned him; he was deaf to this humane Advice, and his Death was the natural Conſequence.

How finely natural is the Interview between *Æneas* and *Andromache*, the Widow of *Hector* and Mother of *Aſtyanax!* It is worth your while to place them plainly and exactly before you. She weeps; he ſtands amazed, and can hardly *hiſs* out (ſuch is the literal Meaning of *Virgil*'s Expreſſion) a few Words.

When

When ſhe has Power of Utterance, ſhe expatiates on many Subjects at once; ſhe relates the Story of her Life ſince the taking of *Troy*, then enquires of his; then queſtions him about his Son, if he was not a promiſing Youth, if he did not copy after him and his Uncle *Hector?* and if he did not take to Heart the Death of his Mother? At parting from *Æneas*, ſhe takes Leave of *Aſcanius*; ſhe calls him the very Picture of her poor *Aſtyanax*: ſhe diſcovers the ſame Countenance, Eyes, and Hands, and that, had he happily ſurvived, he would have been of the ſame Growth. This is the very Strength and Beauty of Nature, whoſe Workings and Effects are the ſame in all Degrees of Life. Our Stations may be different, but our Feelings are alike.

Virgil

Virgil not only dwells upon the Duty of Children to their Parents, but even to their Nurſes, to thoſe who have had the Care of their Infancy. He recommends this, and exalts the Character of his Hero, at the ſame Time. That Part of the Coaſt of *Italy*, where the Nurſe of *Æneas* was buried, was called after her Name, and the pious Hero beſtowed on her an honourable Funeral.

How pleaſing is the Deſcription of *Anna*'s Nurſe (whom *Dido* treated with the ſame Tenderneſs as ſhe would her own, who was deceaſed) with an Intent and buſy Air labouring to execute the Queen's Orders; *Virgil*'s Expreſſion is "Studio anili;" that is, with that Caution

tion and Concern, ſo peculiar to her Age and Office.

Our Author appears alſo as partially fond of his old Men, who are good and pious; his *Priam*, *Anchiſes*, *Evander*, and *Butes*. *Priam* is the firſt Man to encourage *Sinon*, and *Anchiſes* is the ſame to *Achæmenides*. You ſee the Care and Attention which the Tutor of *Aſcanius* ſhews his Pupil. Thus *Virgil* paints Mankind in every Stage and Station of Life, and in all with equal Propriety: his Judgment never fails him.

I had forgot to recommend two very fine Paſſages; the Meeting between *Alecto* and *Turnus*, and the Story of *Æneas*'s Shield, made by *Vulcan*. Had I

nothing to divert me from this my favourite Employ of inſtructing you, my Obſervations ſhould be more copious and diſtinct; but ſtill I hope they are what will be of ſome Uſe. If I have not tired you, I will employ another Letter on this ſame Subject, ſo difficult do I find it to leave this admirable Writer; ever deſiring you to retain in your Mind, that it is not in Order to make you a Critic, only to enable you to read theſe two incomparable Poems, the *Iliad* and *Æneid*, with Pleaſure and Profit.

I am, my dear Angel,

tout à vous,

J. P.

P. S. I ſend this by a private Hand.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

Oxon. Sept. 26, 1742.

My dear Angel,

I Received yours of the 23d inſtant; it gave me more Pleaſure than I can expreſs. Your Sentiments of particular Paſſages in *Homer*, ſo far as you have read, are juſt and fine, and I deſire you will give me your Thoughts on all the Remainder, as you proceed. *Homer* certainly ſtrikes us more than *Virgil*, at firſt. He ſurpaſſes almoſt all Writers in Loftineſs, in Strength, in Fire, and in a boundleſs Fancy. But more of this at Length, when we come to have him before us, and make him our

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mutual Topic; though, in Truth, you have prevented a good deal of what I ſhould have had to ſay on him, and will continue ſo to do, as you go on. I will now conclude my Obſervations on the *Æneid*, and that in as few Words as poſſible.

Virgil makes his Hero not only do humane Offices to his Friends, his Relations, and to his Nurſe, but even to his Servants. His Care of the Funerals of *Miſenus* his Trumpeter, and *Palinurus* his Pilot, are Inſtances of this.

When he deſcribes a funeral Pomp, a Sacrifice, the Admiſſion of an Ambaſſador, the Conſecration of a Trophy, the Celebration of a Feſtival, the Solemnities

nities at declaring War, or concluding Peace, or any Ceremonial whatſoever, it is not only moſt beautifully delivered, but we may be aſſured, he lets us, at the ſame time, into the exact Manners and Cuſtoms of the *Romans*, on all ſuch Occaſions, ſo that Delight and Inſtruction go Hand in Hand.

Not only every word in *Virgil* is a Jewel, but they are all ſo put together, that every Sentence may be ſaid to repreſent a String of Jewels ſet to the beſt Advantage, and the whole *Æneid* is ſo compact, one Part ſo connected with another, that they tend to illuſtrate each other in the moſt ſtriking Colours, and follow in ſuch natural Order and Proceſs, as renders

that *Virgil* had a particular Uſe to make of this Belt, which he had ſo eſpecially mentioned. *Turnus* puts it on, and wears it in Triumph; whereon the Poet makes a uſeful Reflection, and, at the ſame time, gives us a Hint of what will follow. "The Mind of Man," ſays he, "elated with Proſperity, is incapable of "behaving with Moderation, and blind "to Futurity. The Time will come "when *Turnus* will ſorely regret that "ever he aſſaulted *Pallas*."

I will break off here, leſt my Letter ſhould be too long, and give you one more on this Subject.

The Lines, you have quoted,* are in my Opinion the moſt beautiful in the

* "As when the Moon, refulgent Lamp of Night," &c. l. 687 to l. 698.

whole

whole *Iliad.* If you remember, one Night as we were coming through the Park, after I had repeated to you *Milton*'s Deſcription of a fine Evening, I endeavoured to give you thoſe, but could not recollect them all.

Adieu, my Dear,

J. P.

LETTER XXIII.

Oxford, Oct. 1, 1742.

My Dear,

YOUR Letter of the 27th came ſafe to my Hand on the 29th. I really cannot tell you particularly when I ſhall be in Town; but believe it will be ſome Time this Month. My coming depends on the Receipt of ſome Letters from *Scotland.*

As you intend to read the *Æneid* again, there are many things, that I ſhall paſs over, becauſe I would not foreſtall the Pleaſure you are to have, if you read it with due Attention. I ſhall only finiſh the Remark I began about *Pallas*'s Belt.

When *Æneas* vanquiſhes *Turnus*, at the latter Part of the Poem, *Turnus* ſues for his Life. Now it was not proper to grant it; and the Nicety was, how to make *Æneas*, who was ſo famous for Humanity, and a merciful Diſpoſition, not comply with the Requeſt, and yet preſerve his own Character. Behold this very Belt is made uſe of, which naturally and critically meets his Eye at the very Inſtant when his Anger begins to relent and his Heart to melt. He immediately fires, with freſh Reſentment, on recol-

recollection of the cruel Inſults which *Turnus* was guilty of, when he ſlew *Pallas*. Hence a noble Indignation, Reſentment, and even Compaſſion for the Fate of *Pallas* occaſions the Death of *Turnus*; and thus the Poet, by a beautiful Stroke of Fancy, makes that great Event the Reſult of Friendſhip and Pity, which otherwiſe had been an Act of Cruelty. We learn alſo, from the Inſtance before us, this fine Leſſon, "That what People are moſt proud and vain of, is often the Occaſion of their Ruin." There is a noble Reflection to this Purpoſe at the End of the tenth Satire of Juvenal. All that I have further to ſay about the *Æneid*, is, to point out to you ſome charming Compariſons, and then I have done with it. This I ſhall do in my next

Letter, which I propoſe writing on Sunday.

I would have you, my dear, look into the Lives of the ancient Philoſophers; and particularly regard their Obſervations made on Life; they will be of great Uſe to you.

You do not tell me what you think of the Duke of *Rochefoucault's* Maxims, and Obſervations.

I am now going through Ovid's Metamorphoſes anew, and the more I read, the more I am charmed with it. I wonder you do not proceed in that Work. No Man ſurely had ever ſo eaſy, ſo natural, ſo charming a Manner of telling a Story. You love Novels. *Ovid* has an Hundred

Hundred, at leaſt; and all of them infinitely beautiful in their Way. But no more of him at preſent. It will be near a Week before I can ſay any thing to you about *Homer*.

Adios! *

Yours moſt ſincerely,

J. P.

LETTER XXIV.

Oxford, Oct. 3, 1742.

My Dear Nancy,

I Wrote to you on the 1ſt inſtant, with a ſmall Encloſure, which I hope is come ſafe to Hand. It will enable you to

* It is neceſſary to obſerve here, that Mr Preſton had an Intention, had he lived, to make his Pupil acquainted with Italian, Spaniſh and Latin, after ſhe

to buy the *Iliad*, since you love it so well, and furnish you with a little Pocket-money over and above.

You neither write me, if you have been to see the Lady I recommended, again, nor how you like *Rochefoucault*, nor the Arch-bishop of *Cambray's* Lives of the Philosophers; but, I fancy, *Homer* engages all your Attention at present.

I shall conclude all that I have to say about *Virgil*, with pointing out some few striking Comparisons.

he was well-grounded in English and French. It is with this view therefore that he occasionally slides in particular Words, to awaken her Curiosity, in order to make that Instruction wear the Air of a Gratification of her Inquiries, rather then the Imposition of a Task, which, if formally laid down, might appear too heavy and laborious.

In

In the first Book of the *Æneid, Neptune*, reproving the Winds and the Waves, is well compared to a Man of Merit and Authority speaking to an enraged Mob. In the Fourth, *Dido* to a wounded Deer—and *Turnus* and *Æneas*, to two distinct Conflagrations in different Parts of a Forest, or two Torrents pouring down a steep Hill. When *Æneas*, after the Arrow was drawn out with which he was wounded, is returning to the Place of Battle, with the whole Corps de Reserve, while Clouds of Dust arise, and the Earth trembles with the Beating of the Horses Feet, his Enemies, struck with Terror, are nobly compared to Husbandmen, who see a black Storm coming across the Sea, that threatens universal Ruin, destroys the Trees, and lays waste the Fruits of the Earth.

The

The Poet makes it ſtill more terrible by one peculiar Circumſtance, which is a *whiſking* Wind, a certain Fore-runner of ſuch a dreadful Storm, as he there deſcribes.

Æneas purſuing *Turnus*, and not being able to overtake him, is aptly likened to a Hound purſuing a Deer; and this is ſo lively a Repreſentation to one who has ſeen ſuch a Chace, as nothing can ſurpaſs. Again *Turnus*, in his Engagement with *Æneas*, when confounded with Fear and the bad Omens he had met with, and perſuaded the Gods were againſt him, fights indeed, but in ſuch a Manner, as one imagines one does in a Dream. How forcibly pictureſque! But read it. That exceeds all Deſcription.

There

There is, however, a Compariſon in *Milton*, which is far beyond all I ever read in *Virgil*, *Homer*, or any where. That is, the Compariſon of *Michael* and *Satan* to two black Clouds, that fill up the different Parts of the Sky, big with Thunder, Lightening and Tempeſt, and at laſt diſcharge their whole Artillery at each other.

The laſt Obſervation I ſhall make on *Virgil*, is, that he has been a great Lover of what is called the Belles Lettres. We can perceive that he admired Painting himſelf, by what he relates of *Æneas* admiring the Paintings in *Dido*'s Palace before he broke through the Cloud, and by his charming Deſcription of *Æneas*'s Shield. You will find too he loved Statuary Muſick,

Muſick, and Architecture; and you may diſcern the ſame of *Ovid*, in a hundred Places. We ſee two Inſtances of his Skill in the Conteſt between *Pallas* and *Arachne*, and beſide, how nicely he underſtood the Art of weaving Arras. I am reading him over, juſt now. He has ſo many beautiful Stories, that I wonder you do not take more Delight in him, than you appear to do. You love Novels; and I never read any ſo beautiful as his. *Pyramus* and *Thiſbe*; *Medea* and *Jaſon*; *Scylla* and *Minos*; *Cephalus* and *Procris*; *Ceyx* and *Alcyone*; *Perſeus* and *Andromeda*; the Fable of *Niobe*; *Pallas* and *Arachne*; the *Muſes* and the *Pierides*; *Meleager* and *Atalanta*, and a Hundred more, are Stories the moſt exquiſitely told that are any where to be found, and are withal perfect

fect Images of Nature. You may likewiſe diſcern through all how the Poet is delighted with whatever is good and virtuous, worthy and laudable; and, on the other Hand, how he deteſts all kind Vice of and Wickedneſs, nay even every Degree of Rudeneſs and Ill-manners.

It is clear to me that *Ovid* was not only one of the greateſt Wits, and one of the beſt of Men, but one of the beſt-natured, beſt-humoured, and beſt-bred Gentlemen in the World. He wrote indeed with a Sort of Careleſſneſs, and his unhappy Baniſhment hindered him to correct his admirable Poem, the *Metamorphoſes*; which has ever ſince continued the great Fund, whence Sculptors, Painters, and Writers of Operas, and ſome other

other Dramatic Authors have derived their Subjects.

Adieu, my Dear!

☞ This is a Sight, which, it is true I ſaw once; and therefore took care never to ſee it a ſecond Time.

LETTER XXV.

Oxford, Oct. 7, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I Received your moſt agreeable Letter, of the 1ſt inſtant, with infinite Pleaſure. Your Remarks on *Homer* are moſt agreeable and juſt; I muſt only obſerve that *Idomeneus* aſſiſting a wounded Soldier of his own Party, and inſulting an Enemy, are not at all irreconcileable. As to what you call a Slip of the Poet's Memory, I ſhall look into the Paſſage, and give you my Opinion in my next.

I heartily

I heartily agree with you in your Cenſure of *Homer*'s making his Heroes ſo ſavage; and this brings into my Mind a Paſſage of *Horace*,

"*Aliquando bonus dormitat* Homerus,"

that is,

"*The excellent* Homer *ſometimes nods, or is like to drop aſleep.*"

In Alluſion to this, the great Earl of *Roſcommon*,* in one of his Poems, ſpeaking of *Homer*, ſays,

"*His bullying Heroes and his ſcolding Gods,*
"*Make us ſuſpect he ſleeps, as well as nods.*"

* It is much to be lamented that this excellent Writer is not ſo well known as he deſerves to be. His Works ſhould be as familiar, as dear to all Men of true Taſte and Principles. He ſhines with double Luſtre; for-as-much as he was brave enough to draw his Pen in the Cauſe of modeſt Virtue, in the licentious Age of *Charles* the Second.

I have

I have much more to ſay, but not Time for it at preſent. I leave off unwillingly.

Je ſuis,

Ma très chere,

le votre,

J. P.

Je ſcaurois bien dire ce que dit un Poete excellent;

Ουιδ νου κοπεζουν I φοργετ αλλ Τιμε,
Αλλ Σεασονς αιδ Θειρ Χανγες πλεασε αλιλε.*

A Trial of Skill for you—Unriddle it.

* This little playful Condeſcenſion to the youthful Diſpoſition of the Pupil, in a Man of Learning and Genius, is ſurely a ſtrong Proof of the Sweetneſs of Mr. Preſton's Temper, and the Mildneſs of his Heart. He ſtill is the Inſtructor, though in a more familiar and engaging Stile. We may here diſcover, in a great Meaſure, how extenſive an Education he propoſed to give her, had he lived, ſince it is evident he had at this Time made her Miſtreſs of the Greek Alphabet.

Hold

Hold! the Queſtion in your laſt remains unanſwered.

Though *Juno* put on the Ceſtus of *Venus*, ſhe ſtill continued *Juno*; and *Jupiter* did not take her for *Venus*, for ſhe was his Daughter. But *Homer*'s Poems are full of the Mythology of the Antients, that is, allegorical Stories. By the Ceſtus of *Venus* are implied thoſe Charms and fine Accompliſhments, which make a Woman lovely. *Juno*, in fine, laid down all her jealous Fits, her Pride, her Ill-nature, and Scolding, and put on Sweetneſs and Kindneſs, in their ſtead. If I remember right, the Poet alſo ſays, that ſhe dreſſed after bathing, and waſhing all Impureneſs from her Perſon; inſinuating hereby how

how becoming is Elegance and Cleanlineſs in either Man or Woman.

Encore adieu, ma chere! Je vous ſouffle dix Baiſers.

LETTER XXVI.

Oxford, Oct. 17, 1742.

My Dear

I HAVE juſt now received a Letter from you not dated. I wonder the Books ſhould have coſt you ſo much, eſpecially *Homer*. But I preſume you do not know where they may be cheapeſt purchaſed, or the Bookſeller has impoſed on you—No matter. You have the Authors for your conſtant Amuſement.

You

You have given me a very particular Account, how you have laid out the Contents of the Draught; but that was more than I desired. I only wished to know how it had been *chiefly* bestowed, not how you had laid out every Farthing. That had been the Exaction of a hard Dealer, not the liberal Claim of a Guardian and Friend. The more prudently you lay out your Money the better for yourself, and this was all the Satisfaction I required. I think, however, you have assigned all that is disbursed to good Uses.

I shall write again soon

Adios!

J. P.

LETTER XXVII.

Oxford, Oct. 18, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

THE laſt I wrote to you was ſhort, and this will not be much longer, it being the fifth Letter this Day, and I am accountable for the Diſpatch of as many more this Poſt. Pray deliver the encloſed without loſs of Time.

I hope to be in Town this Week, or the next at fartheſt, but let not that hinder your writing to me as oft as you have Leiſure. If you have Nothing to write, write me that Nothing; for Nothing you can write will be unwelcome, and Nothing will even be welcome, if it *look* like

like Something.* It will ſhew, at leaſt, a kind Attention, and that is very valuable.

In my next I ſhall treat about *Homer*; and hope to have a Letter from you upon that Author; that is to ſay, a Continuation of your Remarks. This too I flatter myſelf I ſhall receive ſoon.

Give my humble Service to your Mama and Aunt, and believe me to be,

my dear Nancy,

your hearty Well-wiſher

and real Friend,

J. P.

* In this Play upon a Word, Mr. Preſton ſeems to have had the following Line of *Ovid*'s Art of Love in his Mind, or, at leaſt, is juſtified by it, "*If* there be *Nothing*, bruſh that *Nothing* thence."

LETTER XXVII.

Oxford, Oct. 24, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I HAVE the Pleaſure of yours of the 21ſt inſtant; and am exceedingly pleaſed to find you have executed all my Commiſſions with ſo much Addreſs and Prudence.

You need not fear being troubleſome to the Lady, your new Acquaintance, if you go at proper Times. Obſerve the Diſpoſition the Family is in, and whether Buſineſs, or any other Cauſe, may not make your Viſit unſeaſonable; which you'll eaſily diſcover; and in that caſe, let your Stay be ſhort. Take care too

always

always to leave a due Diſtance of Time between your Viſits. What I wrote you once before, I will write again, though it becomes almoſt unneceſſary now. Never give yourſelf Airs, nor ſhew Affectation, nor endeavour to *ſhine* as it is called. Talk modeſtly, within the Compaſs of your Underſtanding, and if you don't court Praiſe, Praiſe will court you.

Before I enter upon *Homer*, let me obſerve, that you have omitted to mention the Figure *Hector* makes at the End of the Twelfth Book; where he breaks through the Grecian Entrenchments, *like ſudden Night, and with Eyes burning like Fire*, as the Poet expreſſes it. This is thought one of the moſt ſpirited Paſſages in the whole Work. It is incomparable

in the Greek, and not much ſhort of the Original in the Engliſh.

I am ſorry to tell you that I cannot ſee you ſo ſoon as I expected. It will not ſuit my Affairs to leave this Place for ten Days yet; but be ſure to write me often in that Time; that is, as often as your other Buſineſs will allow, and let *Homer* be the Subject of your Letters. I will write you as frequently as I can, and begin upon the ſame Subject.

I have juſt now entered upon *Pope's* Preface and Eſſay, to ſee whether ſome of the Particulars I have remarked are not in his Obſervations. *Homer* will furniſh us Matter enough to write about. I would rather have you ſend ſhort Letters,

ters, and often, than long Letters, and ſeldom.

My kind Service to your Mama, Aunt, and Mrs. M——. I hope to dine with you on my Birth-day.

Adieu, my dear Life!

I am

your real Friend and Servant,

J. P.

LETTER XXIX.

Oxford, Oct. 29, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

JUST now I have the Pleaſure of yours of the 28th. You mentioned a Paſſage in the Thirteenth Book of the *Iliad*, which was the laſt, on that Subject. I

am just now reading the Observations on the First Book. I hope to see you on Thursday Night, or Friday Morning, and when I come, we shall compare Notes. I do not mean to be guilty of a Pun here, though it sounds much like it.

I shall go to-morrow to a Gentleman's House, about twelve miles from this, where I shall stay three Days, and thence set out for London.

My intended Visit is not the Call of Business, but mere Matter of Ceremony, which you know I am not over fond of; yet I think it a kind of Duty to comply with it. The Gentleman was here for a Week, during which Time I conversed with him frequently. He is sensible, and his Character good. He pressed me earnestly

neſtly to give him my Company ſome Days at his Retreat. An earneſt Intreaty is a warm Compliment; and as my Peculiarity of Humour, namely a diſlike to Strangers, was my ſtrongeſt Objection, I held it incumbent on me, by the Rule of Politeneſs, to ſubmit my own Peculiarity to his. There are many Punctilios, which we ought to give way to, as Brethren of Society, if a more important Claim does not interfere.

Give my Service to the Perſons mentioned in your Letter, and write me by next Poſt. After that, I hope to ſee you before you will have occaſion to write again.

I am, dear Nancy,

yours moſt affectionately,

J. P.

LETTER XXX.*

Wickham, 27 Miles from London.

Nov. 11, 1742.

My dear Life,

I WENT to Bed Yeſternight, that is to ſay, this Morning, about two. I was wakened about Five, and in the Coach near half an Hour after Seven. We got to Uxbridge before Twelve, where we took Breakfaſt; but I had wiſely drank

* We here ſee the Tutor on his return to *Oxford*, after a ſhort Excurſion to *London*; and it is worth while to draw a Parallel between the modern Mode of travelling and that which was practiſed Thirty Years ago. Here were Ten Hours conſumed in getting Twenty-ſeven Miles, and almoſt two Days requiſite for travelling from *London* to *Oxford*. Had our preſent Expedition on the Road been propoſed to our Anceſtors as a poſſible Thing, they would probably have derided it as the Dream of a Lunatic.

three

three Diſhes of Coffee, and eaten a buttered Toaſt before-hand.

We arrived here before Five. We dined; and now after finiſhing the encloſed Letter, I write you this, deſiring you not to neglect the Encloſure. My Health is not clever, but I hope to ſleep well to-night, and then I ſhall be right again. To Children, and Perſons advanced in Life, Sleep is a Medicine for many Ills; and ſurely the pleaſanteſt of all Medicines. Did you ever read *Shakeſpeare*'s Tragedy of *Macbeth*? if not get it, and ſend me your Opinion of it. I will tranſcribe his Paſſage on Sleep, which, for the luxuriant Variety of ſweet and noble Images, is ſcarce to be equalled.

"*The innocent Sleep,*
"*Sleep that knits up the ravell'd Sleeve of Care,*
"*The Death of each day's Life, ſore Labour's Bath,*
"*Balm of hurt Minds, great Nature's ſecond Courſe,*
"*Chief Nouriſher in Life's Feaſt.*"

What a Group of beautiful Images are here! Nor has the great Bard aſſembled them merely to indulge his fine Fancy; no, they are of a Piece with the great Action of the Scene, and anſwer an important moral End; for by how much he endears to us the ineſtimable Bleſſing of Sleep, by ſo much he aggravates the atrocious Crime of Murder, from the Commiſſion whereof *Macbeth* is but juſt returned. Obſerve too the firſt Epithet which he gives to Sleep, *innocent*; it is very copious. It not only implies that Sleep is innocent in itſelf, that while we

ſleep

ſleep, we are free from Guilt, but that Sleep moſt naturally dwells with innocent and undiſturbed Minds.

I have no doubt but I ſhall dream of you to-night for I have been dreaming of you all Day. I ſhall write you again on Sunday, and include a ſmall Miſſive to Mr. K—, which you will deliver when you think fit. Give my humble Service to your Mama and Aunt, and believe me to be moſt truly

your Friend,

J. P.

LETTER VIII.

Oxford, Nov. 22, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I Wrote to you from *Wickham*, which I hope is come to your Hand. I have little to ſay at preſent, only that I am well, having

having arrived here ſafe and found on Saturday about three o'clock.

I have encloſed a Letter to Mr. K—, which you need not deliver till you have Occaſion for a Recruit of Caſh. I ſhall endeavour to get ſome Franks for you. Let me know when you meet with a *Spencer* to your Mind; though I think you have ſo many Books already to read and conſider, that you need not be over haſty.

Go on with your Obſervations on the *Iliad*, and write to me ſoon. When you ſit down to write, you ſhould be at Leiſure, have a Diſpoſition for it, have the Subject digeſted in your Mind, be in a chearful complying Humour, have a good Pen, good Ink, and good Paper, and

place

place yourſelf in an eaſy and convenient Poſture. All theſe Things will make you write ſo as to pleaſe, and even make the Hand itſelf more agreeable.

My humble Service to your Mama and Aunt, and be aſſured that I am,

my dear Angel,

your moſt affectionate

and faithful Friend,

J. P.

LETTER XXXII.

Oxford, Nov. 29, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I HAD the Pleaſure of yours of the 25th, the next Day after it was written. I have very little to ſay at preſent and

and believe I ſhould not write at all till another Occaſion, were it not for the Pleaſure I take in converſing with you, and for fear you ſhould think I forget you, which I never do.

I greatly approve your not going to Mr. K—, till you have an abſolute Occaſion, for that was the Purpoſe of giving you the Credit. You know, my dear, young as you are, I have not ſcrupled to acquaint you exactly what I hold in truſt for you; and it would be Folly to laviſh away in Trifles what is meant for material Uſes; beſides you would neither have the Satisfaction nor Advantage that I intend, if you were to miſemploy your little Fortune. But I am counſelling one, who wants no Advice in theſe Points. My

Letter

Letter of Credit is not in Force till to-morrow; but you did not know that, and I am pleaſed you did not; as in that Caſe, your poſtponing your Claim had been the Conſequence of my Advice, which is now the Reſult of your own Prudence. Purchaſe the Capuchin you mention, if you have a Fancy for it, be the Price what it may. There is no Occaſion for a trifling Oeconomy in Matters which are real Neceſſaries of Life. To retrench in Superfluities is our chief Duty, and ought to be our conſtant Care. Were this Point generally attended to, I believe moderate Incomes would go much farther than they do at preſent.

Have you made the Improvements in your Apparel, which I recommended? Have you ſeen your agreeable Acquaintance?

tance? How does ſhe? How do your Aunt and Mother? Tell me all that relates to you, though in the moſt diſtant Degree.

I am juſt now going to read a Book of the *Iliad* that I may be the better enabled to converſe with you on that Subject.

Adieu, ma très chere petite Ange, et ſois bien et aſſurement perſuadée que

Je ſuis

votre très fidelle Ami,

J. P.

LETTER XXXIII.

Oxford, Dec. 2, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I Should begin this Letter with *Homer*, and proceed in Form and Order, but I have ſo many Letters to write this Day, that

that I dare not venture on it. I ſhall only mark out two or three Paſſages in the Fourth Book of the *Iliad*, which I have juſt now read, and which I think peculiarly fine.

The firſt is at Line 492:

" *As when the fleecy Flocks un-number'd ſtand*
" *In wealthy Folds, and wait the Milker's Hand,*
" *The hollow Vales inceſſant Bleating fills,*
" *The Lambs reply from all the neighb'ring Hills.*

The ſecond is at Line 516:

" *As Torrents roll, increas'd by num'rous Rills,*
" *With Rage impetuous down their echoing Hills;*
" *Raſh to the Vales, and, pour'd along the Plain,*
" *Roar thro' a thouſand Channels to the Main;*
" *The diſtant Shepherd trembling hears the Sound,*
" *So mix both Hoſts, and ſo their Cries rebound.*

Theſe

These are two fine Comparisons, and, at the same Time, are noble Descriptions. I the rather quote them to you, because you might possibly pass them over, without regarding them so much, as you never saw the Originals, of which these Descriptions are a Picture; but if you had seen them, as I have often done (being born and bred up all my younger Days in a very mountainous Country) you would own that nothing can be more natural or beautiful.

To understand the first Comparison rightly, it is necessary to know that when the Lambs arrive at a certain Age, they are weaned, and put in a separate Flock by themselves. The Ewes are put in Folds to be milked. That reci-

procal

procal Deſire which the Ewes and Lambs have to be together, makes them bleat inceſſantly, and, when within hearing, they regularly anſwer each other; thoſe Sounds the Hills echo back, and fill the whole Valleys, or Glens (as we call them in *Scotland)* with a very agreeable Noiſe, even Muſick is ſcarcely more agreeable; at leaſt, to me.

How exceedingly fine is the Deſcription of Diſcord, Line 503,

"*Small at her Birth and riſing every Hour*," &c.

This is very judiciouſly placed where the Grecians and Trojans, who were nearly reconciled, differ again. The Colouring ſuits the Nature of Diſcord, or Strife, admirably; which often ariſes from

from very ſmall Beginnings, perhaps from a meer Trifle; and to what a monſtrous Height does it ſometimes grow! It reminds me of what Solomon ſays,

"The Beginning of Strife is like the "letting in of Water;"

for if we will make but a ſmall Paſſage for Water to enter at, it will itſelf enlarge it ſufficiently. We have this expreſſive Proverb in *Scotland*,

"The Mother of Miſchief is no greater "than a Midge's Wing,"

that is, a Gnat's Wing—intimating how ſmall a Circumſtance, how worthleſs and inconſiderable, may occaſion much Contention and great Miſchief.

The

The Moral, on the whole is, *Avoid Strife as much as poſſible*, and, as the Apoſtle ſays excellently,

"Seek Peace with all Men."

Adieu, my deareſt Nancy!

I am

your faithful Friend,

J. P.

P. S. I forgot to remark to you that the Deſcription of the Storm, and Torrents breaking down the Sides of the Hills, in the Twelfth Book of the *Æneid*, are admirably painted.

LETTER XXXIV.

Oxford, Dec. 6, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I HAD a Letter from you by yeſterday's Poſt, which gave me great Pleaſure,

I ſhould

I ſhould now begin to explain to you the Nature of the *Iliad*, the *Odyſſey*, and the *Æneid*; but I do not know if you have yet made any Progreſs in the admirable Treatiſe on Epick Poetry, by *Monſieur Boſſu*. If you have read, and marked him attentively, I could omit many Things, as needleſs, and yet write a great deal more, that you would underſtand and be pleaſed with. But this would not be proper, before you have read that compleat Treatiſe, which unfolds the whole Art and Myſtery of the Epick Poem.

Mr. *Pope*, I think, ſays, that the *Iliad* points out the Effects of Anger; the *Odyſſey* thoſe of Patience and Wiſdom. The Effects of Anger and Reſentment, are raſh,

raſh, mad, and fooliſh Actions, tending to Miſery and Deſtruction. The Effects of Patience and long Suffering are well-adviſed Actions, terminating in the Accompliſhment of our Wiſhes and leading to Happineſs. *Horace*, who knew Mankind as well, perhaps, as any Man, who lived before or ſince his Time, (except ſome few whom we meet in the Holy Writings) ſays, that "He who violently haſtens his Revenge, renders the very End he would attain, ineffectual." The *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* are two great Examples of the Truth of this. In the former we ſee the Rage and Reſentment of *Achilles* and *Agamemnon* fruſtrate the very Deſign, for which they came to *Troy*; to wit, the Deſtruction of the Town. What Miſeries did they not occaſion? What loſs of gallant Men? And *Achilles*, who

even got the better in the Conteſt between him and *Agamemnon*, paid dear for it in the Loſs of his beloved *Patroclus*. What though he had the Satisfaction, or rather Triumph, of killing *Hector*, (a much worthier Man than himſelf) yet that did not remove his Grief and Miſery; for, after that, we ſtill find him in the Agonies of Sorrow; ſo true is it, that even when our blind and mad Deſires are granted, we find ourſelves as far from Happineſs as we were before. Again, what did the Satisfaction of killing *Hector* coſt him? In the firſt Place, we ſee he was forced to forego the ſavage Pleaſure, he took in abuſing the Body of that illuſtrious Chief; in ſpite of his Teeth, as we ſay, *Jove* compelled him to forego it. He was even obliged to do honour to the

Corpſe.

Corpſe. Furthermore we find his own Fate was attached to that of *Hector*. *Hector* told him, at his Death, "the Gods "would not let his Death paſs unreven-"ged." *Apollo* accordingly met *Achilles* at the *Scean* Gate, and revenged it home; and, to his utter Diſgrace, made him fall at laſt by a far leſs worthy Hand than that of *Hector*.

I ſhall take Notice of this Particular more at length, in ſome following Letter. All I ſhall add at preſent, is, that it is true we have not ſuch Thunder and Lightning, ſo great an Eclat, ſuch bold Characters, ſuch Force, ſuch Grandeur and Majeſty in the *Odyſſey*, as in the *Iliad*; yet the *Arch-biſhop of Cambray* obſerves, that the Antients, (at leaſt the beſt Judges and Criticks of Antiquity) do not give

the *Iliad* the Preference. I ſhall not repeat what he ſays on that Head, but refer you to his own Words; they are in the *Dialogues des Morts*.

Adieu, my dear Nancy,

I am

your unfeigned Friend,

J. P.

LETTER XXXV.

Oxford, Dec. 12, 1742

My dear,

YEſterday's Poſt brought me yours of the 9th, in which your Hurry makes you leave out ſome Words, and miſplace others; this I wiſh you to guard againſt. It is a Neglect unworthy of you.

Before

Before you proceed in the *Iliad*, I muſt beg you to read *Boſſu*, at leaſt ſome Chapters in the Beginning of his admirable Treatiſe. They will give you a proper Idea of the Nature and Plan of this, and every other Heroick Poem. There is alſo a ſhort Diſcourſe on Epick Poetry prefixed to the laſt Engliſh Tranſlation of *Telemaque*, which is well worth your Attention; though I cannot agree with the Writer in preferring *Telemaque* to *Homer* and *Virgil*.

I do not recommend theſe Books, in order to make you a nice Critick, but to enable you to read ſuch Works as the *Iliad*, *Odyſſey*, *Æneid*, *Paradiſe Loſt* and *Telemachus*, with greater Pleaſure and Profit. You may add to the Liſt, *Taſſo*'s *Jeruſalem*,

which I have just finished (a fine Poem indeed, and admirably translated) and *Ramsay's Travels of Cyrus*, about which we will talk when I come to Town.

There are several other Works, some of which you have, that will be of great Service towards forming a true Idea of those noble Authors, and likewise of all other kinds of Poetry; such as *Aristotle's Art of Poetry*, *Roscommon on Translated Verse*, *Horace*, *Vida*, and the *Duke of Buckingham's Art of Poetry*, *Rapin's* and *Dacier's Discourses on Eloquence and Poetry*, *Dryden's* and *Pope's Discourses*, *Pope's Art of Criticism*, the most excellent *Archbishop of Cambray's Discourse on Eloquence*, and the *Spectators on Milton*. *Congreve's Letter on Humour* is also most excellent and judi-

judicious, ſo are *Dr. Trapp*'s *Diſcourſes on Virgil.* Theſe Writings will give you a true Notion of Tragedy, Comedy, Satire, Paſtoral, Ode, Elegy, and Song, as well as of Epick Poetry; which laſt indeed, together with Tragedy and Comedy, are the three great Species of Poetry.

I will now ſuppoſe that you have formed, or procured, a right Notion of the Nature of an Heroick Poem, and of the Action; that it muſt be one great, intire, marvelous, but not incredible Piece, of a juſt Length, inſtructive and entertaining; I will preſume likewiſe that you have a Notion of the Characters, Manners, Sentiment and Diction, and of the ornamental Aid of Figures, Epiſodes, Deſcriptions, and Similes or Compariſons,

by which thoſe Characters and Manners are ſet off to Advantage.

This being all pre-ſuppoſed, let us enquire what *Homer* propoſes to do in his two matchleſs Poems, and then examine the End and Tendency of that Propoſition.

We will begin with the *Iliad*. Mr. *Pope* ſays, that the Subject of the *Iliad* is the ſhorteſt, that ever was undertaken, namely, the Anger of *Achilles*. Mr. *Dryden*, if I am not miſtaken, ſays that *Virgil*'s Propoſition or Subject, is far preferable to the former. The one is the Anger of *Achilles*, the other is the Eſtabliſhment of a noble Empire, the nobleſt, perhaps, that the World ever ſaw.

Now

Now I cannot agree altogether either with *Pope* or *Dryden*; for, in the firſt Inſtance, it is not the Anger of *Achilles*, ſimply conſidered, that *Homer* propoſes for the Buſineſs of his Poem, but the Delays, Diſappointments, and Calamities, which attended the Grecks in Conſequence of the Anger and Reſentment of *Achilles*. This is the Plan which he lays down, and on which he promiſes to proceed; and the particular Moral, that naturally ariſes from it, is the moſt proper and uſeful that could be offered to his Countrymen. The Grecians were compoſed of many little States; it was therefore their Intereſt to be unanimous, and cloſely united, when engaged in a common Cauſe. How apt then was his Moral! He wiſhed them to learn that their Safety

conſiſted in their Union, and that Diſcord and Diſſenſion would be their Ruin; this was in the Courſe of Time, actually verified. *Philip* of *Macedon* overthrew and enſlaved them; and the Means he purſued to bring it about, was firſt by ſowing Diſſenſion among them, and dividing one State from the other. So divided, he found them an eaſy Conqueſt. The ſame Thing has happened a thouſand Times ſince, not only in ſovereign States and Kingdoms, but even in private Families. One of our Saviour's Tenets, is, "A Kingdom divided againſt "itſelf cannot ſtand;" and this is the grand Moral, which ariſes out of the particular Subject of the *Iliad*.

In the next Place, if we conſider the Tendency of the Poem, I do not ſee but

it

it may be deemed of as great Conſequence as that of the *Æneid*, though it may not be ſo ſpeciouſly agreeable. The Tendency of the one is to ſhew by what Means, Degrees, and worthy Qualities, a mighty Empire was founded: The Tendency of the other, to point out the Miſconduct, the Vices, and Follies, by which a great Undertaking was almoſt ruined (and indeed had been entirely ſo, but for an extraordinary Accident) and the whole Force of *Greece* overpowered. This laſt is ſurely as uſeful a Leſſon as the firſt; and ſtrictly juſtifiable in *Homer*, in-as-much as he propoſed to write another Poem, wherein he was to demonſtrate the great and good Effects of Virtue; for ſuch is the Purport of the *Odyſſey*.

I think it is Mr. *Addiſon*, who ſays that, beſide the grand particular Moral, that ariſes out of an Epick Poem, or that which the Poet had chiefly in view, there are many others, which contingently reſult from the Fable. This is certainly true; it appears manifeſtly in *Homer*; and perhaps it was as much his Intention to ſhew theſe, as the great Moral above-mentioned. In my enſuing Letters I will occaſionally mark out ſome of theſe, and deſcribe what I conjecture to be the great univerſal Intention of the Author. At preſent, I fear I have tired you, ſo ſhall trouble you no more for two or three Days.

Adieu, ma très chere!

J. P.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

Oxford, Dec. 13, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I HAVE ſome few Remarks to make in this Letter, on the Sixth Book of the *Iliad*, but they are very few. *Pope* has given us ſo many fine Obſervations, that little is left for any other Pen. You have alſo contributed to leſſen what I might have had to ſay, by ſending ſome of your own, which I am much pleaſed with.

The Speech, which *Hector* makes to his Mother, is admirable;

Far hence be Bacchus' Gifts!' (the Chief rejoin'd)
Inflaming Wine, pernicious to Mankind,
Unnerves the Limbs, and dulls the noble Mind.

Let

Let Chiefs abſtain, and ſpare the ſacred Juice
To ſprinkle to the Gods, its better Uſe;
By me that holy Office were prophan'd,
Ill fits it me, with human Gore diſtain'd,
To the pure Skies theſe horrid Hands to raiſe,
Or offer Heav'n's great Sire polluted Praiſe.

The four laſt Lines are peculiarly beautiful, and conform to that Place of Holy Scripture, where *David*, being "A Man of Blood," was not allowed by *God* to build him a Temple.

All that paſſes between *Hector* and his Wife is beautiful beyond Compariſon, eſpecially his laſt Reply;

Andromache, *my Soul's far better Part,*
Why with unkindly Sorrows heaves thy Heart?
No hoſtile Hand can antedate my Doom,
Till Fate condemns me to the ſilent Tomb.

Fix'd

Fix'd is the Term to all the Race of Earth,
And ſuch the hard Condition of our Birth.
No Force can then reſiſt, no Flight can ſave,
All ſink alike, the fearful and the brave.
No more—but haſten to thy Taſks at home
There guide the Spindle, and direct the Loom;
Me Glory ſummons to the martial Scene,
The Field of Combat is the Sphere for Men.
Where Heroes war, the foremoſt Place I claim,
The firſt in Danger, as the firſt in Fame.

Throughout the whole Work, *Hector's* Piety towards God, his conjugal and paternal Affection, his Love to his Country, his filial Duty, and his Reſignation to the Will of Providence, are placed in a moſt glorious Light.

The following Compariſon in the Seventh Book,

As when a general Darkneſs veils the Main,
(Soft Zephyr curling the wide watry Plain,)
The Waves ſcarce heave, the Face of Ocean ſleeps,
And a ſtill Horror ſaddens all the Deeps,

is inimitably pictureſque; but you will ſay you never ſaw ſuch a Scene in your Life, and much of the Beauty is thereby loſt.

I will only mention one more favourite Paſſage of mine, in the Eighth Book, and ſubjoin a Tranſcript of ſome few Verſes of *Iſaiah*, which it is worth your while to compare with it.

Full Hecatombs lay burning on the Shore,
The Winds to Heav'n the curling Vapours bore;
Ungrateful Off'ring to th' immortal Pow'rs!
Whoſe Wrath hung heavy o'er the Trojan Tow'rs;
Nor Priam, nor his Sons obtain'd their Grace,
Proud Troy they hated, and her guilty Race.

Iſaiah

Iſaiah, Chap. i. "To what purpoſe "is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto "me? ſaith the Lord. I am full of the "burnt Offerings of Rams, &c."

"When ye come to appear before me, "who hath required this at your Hands, "to tread my Courts?"

"Bring no more vain Oblations, &c."

"Your new Moons, and your ap-"pointed Feaſts my Soul hateth; they "are a Trouble to me; I am weary to "bear them."

What a Smilitude between the Poet, and the Prophet!

I am, my dear Nancy,

Ie votre,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

Oxford, Dec. 16, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

BY yesterday's Post, I received yours of the 14th, but cannot much commend the Writing. I do not desire you to write me, when you are in so very great a Hurry; rather put it off, till you have more Leisure.

I shall not trouble you with a long Letter of Particulars at present, but give you my Opinion of the *Iliad* in general.

Beside the great Moral thereof, there are many other Things which the Conduct of the Poem was meant to set forth.

We

We are ſhewn the ill Effects of unlawful Love, vain Glory, Pride, Injuſtice, Breach of Faith, Diſſimulation, Cowardice, Covetouſneſs, *&c.* for Inſtance, in *Paris, Agamemnon, Ajus, Pandarus, Dolon,* and many others. Hence as the *particular* Intent of this wonderful Poem, is to ſhew the fatal Conſequences of Diſſenſion and Anger among Princes, ſo the main and general Deſign ſeems calculated to point out the bad Effects of ungoverned Paſſions and Appetites in all Mankind; to ſet forth, that our giving way to them leads into Sin, that one Sin leads into another, and the whole into Miſery and Puniſhment.

The great Moral ariſing from it, is, (to give it you in the Greek)

Διὸς

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο Βυλή·

that is to ſay, " So the Counſel of the Gods was perfected, or fulfilled." This is the very Beginning of the *Iliad*, and Mr. *Pope* has tranſlated it,

Such was the ſov'reign Will, and ſuch the Doom of Jove.

But *Homer* is much ſhorter, more ſimple, and ſublime; for Βυλή does not only ſignify *Will*, but *Counſel*, and *wiſe Determination*; hereby teaching us that Miſery is the Conſequence of ill-governed Paſſions; and according to the ſtated Nature of Things, it muſt be ſo. How agreeable is this to the Spirit of the ſacred Scriptures, where it is ſaid,

" The

" The Counſel of the Lord endureth
" for ever, but the Counſel of the wicked
" ſhall be brought to nought."

I was very well pleaſed the other Day when I found the above Sentence called, in *Pope*'s Notes, the *grand Moral* of the Poem; for, in Truth, though I had always thought ſo, I did not know that any one had ſaid it.

Adieu, my dear!

J. P.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Oxford, Dec. 17, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I Wrote to you yeſterday, and having now a leiſure Afternoon, I ſhall continue the ſame Subject.

Homer

Homer ſhews us there is a neceſſary natural Connection between giving way to our inordinate Appetites and Affections, and tranſgreſſing our Duty to God and Man; and thence a conſequential Tendency to Miſery and Puniſhment. It is in this Senſe that one of the minor Prophets ſays, "Is there Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?" teaching us thereby that no Miſchief or Evil befalls an impious City or People, but what happens by the wiſe Counſel and Will of God.

There are two Ways, whereby the great Author of the *Iliad* ſhews us the Connection between Miſery and Sin, and between Sin and inordinate Affections. The one is, the natural Connection we have

have before obſerved; the other, the immediate Vengeance of God, proceeding from his Diſpleaſure. Of theſe we find Inſtances without Number, both in *Homer* and the Holy Writings: for Example, the Plagues of *Egypt* are ſuch a lively Parallel, that one would almoſt ſwear *Homer* had copied from *Moſes*. *Pope* and *Madame Dacier* have obſerved, that the Gradation of Puniſhments related by *Moſes*, is imitated by the other; and in both, the long Suffering and Goodneſs of God is remarkable. In the *Iliad*, firſt the Dogs, then the Fowls of the Air, then the Cattle, laſtly, the People themſelves were ſmitten with the Darts of *Apollo*. In the Scripture, the Lice, the Locuſts, the Flies, &c. preceded the cutting off the firſt-born. But

I need

I need not ſay more on this Head, only refer to the Paſſages; and indeed many other Poets, as well as *Homer*, abound with Examples of this Kind.

The next Thing to be pointed out, my dear, is, how admirably the Greek Poet has made inordinate Affections beget Offences to God, and Injuries to Man; and how naturally and clearly he has made Miſeries and Puniſhments ariſe out of the former. But I will not detain you longer now, than to wiſh you Health and Happineſs; and that you may improve theſe Things, not leſs to your Advantage, than to your Pleaſure.

Adieu, my dear Nancy,

I am always yours,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

Oxford, Dec. 21, 1742.

My dear,

I Wrote you on Friday the 17th, and thought I might poſſibly hear from you on Sunday, but perhaps my Letter did not come Time enough to your Hand.

Mr. *Pope* has obſerved, that, through the *Iliad*, *Homer* has, in a Manner, made every thing done by Divine Providence. Some Deity always aſſiſts the Hero who gets the better, except *Ajax* alone. When *Hector* breaks through the Grecian Wall, and ſets fire to their Ships, *Jupiter* aſſiſts him. When he is killed, *Jupiter*

has abandoned him, and *Pallas* aſſiſts *Achilles*. In a Word, in all Encounters, and in all Actions, where any Point is to be gained by Valour, Courage, or Wiſdom, the ſupreme Power aſſiſts; in Defeat and Diſappointment, that Power deſerts them. How conformable ſtill to the holy Writings, where God is ſaid, "To put Wiſdom into the Heart, to ſtrengthen it;" and on the contrary, "To make blind, and to harden the Heart."

Virgil has often ſaid, that ſuch and ſuch an Event came about by Chance, by the Viciſſitude of Fortune, and by the Inſtability of human Affairs. Perhaps he meant the ſame with *Homer*, (ſince he has often mentioned the Fates, or Decrees

of

of the Gods in very expreſs Terms; though his Meaning is not ſo clearly pointed; but *Homer* is peculiarly ſtrict in his Expreſſions, for he always makes the Will or Counſel of the Supreme to be the Diſpoſer of every thing; by which we may learn what worthy Sentiments he had of the true God, and that all Things muſt be regulated by his wiſe Counſel, howſoever they may appear mere Chance to *us*, who, by reaſon of our human Blindneſs and Weakneſs, can neither foreſee nor avoid Thouſands of Events, that fall out every Day and every Hour.

This, perhaps, you will reckon a Digreſſion, and it is ſo; but it opens

the Way to what I ſhall write you in my next.

I am, my dear Nancy,

your real Friend,

J. P.

P. S. After writing the above, I have received yours, and ſhall anſwer it to-morrow or next Day.

LETTER XL.

Oxford, Dec. 22, 1742.

Dear Nancy,

HOMER's Intention, as I have obſerved before, is to ſhew us that inordinate Affections lead to Sin, and Sin to Miſery. He gives us a hundred

Inſtances

Inſtances to prove this, but the chief is, *The Wrath of Achilles* *.

Beſide the Inſtances themſelves, the beautiful Order and natural Connection, in which he diſpoſes them, fully illuſtrate his Propoſition; and, from the whole Tenor of his Story, this Concluſion naturally ariſes, that the Counſel and wiſe Diſpoſition of God is fulfilled in every thing. Mr. *Pope* has ſhewed this in his Notes on many particular Paſſages throughout the *Iliad*; but if we take a ſhort View of the Fable or Story,

* The great Deſign and Tendency of the *Iliad* is repeatedly ſet forth and illuſtrated by Mr. *Preſton*; yet I cannot preſume it was through Inadvertency to what he had once ſaid; it was certainly his Intention ſo to do, in order to make a ſtrong and laſting Impreſſion on his Pupil's Mind.

we ſhall then ſee it in the cleareſt Light.

Though the Author begins with the *Wrath of Achilles*, yet, in the Courſe of his Works, he takes care to ſhew us the Source of *all* the Miſeries which he has painted in his moſt admirable Poem.

Paris was a Youth of royal Blood, beautiful and amorous; he ſung and played; he ſeduced from her Huſband the moſt beautiful Woman in the World, perhaps as amorous as himſelf. Her Huſband, who had hoſpitably entertained him, reſents this Uſage: he aſks the Aſſiſtance of his Friends, and the neighbouring States. They ſail to *Troy*, deſtroy

ſtroy the Country, and, at laſt, ſit down before the Town. The Daughter to the Prieſt of *Apollo* was made a Captive. Her Father goes to redeem her. *Agamemnon* refuſes his moſt juſt Suit, threatens and ill-treats him. The Prieſt complains to his God, who ſends Plagues firſt upon the Grecian Cattle, then upon the People. The Cauſes hereof are enquired; the Prophet is afraid of the King, but being aſſured of Protection from *Achilles*, proclaims aloud the Cauſe of the Diſpleaſure of Heaven. *Agamemnon* inſults him. Hereupon a Conteſt enſues between *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*, wherein they ill-treat each other. *Agamemnon* threatens to take *Achilles*'s Captive, *Briſeis*, from him, and actually does it; on which *Achilles* refuſes to

fight for the *Grecians*. The *Trojans* obtain many Advantages by this Refuſal. A Duel is propoſed by *Paris*, and accepted on the Terms propoſed. *Menelaus* is treacherouſly wounded. The *Trojans* refuſe to reſtore *Helen*, or ſtand to the Terms agreed on; and though *Priam* was certainly of the ſame Opinion with *Antenor*, that ſhe ought to be given up, yet, through Indulgence to his Son, he ſubſcribes to a Breach of the Agreement. Hereupon Battle on Battle enſues. Both *Greeks* and *Trojans* are miſerably deſtroyed; and conſequently many Proofs are given of Courage, Wiſdom, Piety, Conſtancy, Patience, Friendſhip, and Compaſſion, as alſo of Cowardice, Raſhneſs, Brutality, Vanity, Cruelty, and almoſt of all Virtues and Vices. The ſeveral

Incidents

Incidents are managed with great Addreſs. Honourable Embaſſies are ſent to *Achilles* to return to the Service of the *Greeks*. He is inexorable till *Hector* kills his Friend. This gets the better of his Reſolutions; he returns to the Fight, from a Principle of Revenge, and kills *Hector*.

Adieu.

J. P.

LETTER XLI.

Oxford, Dec. 26, 1742.

My dear,

IN my laſt I gave you a ſhort Summary or Argument of the whole Fable of the *Iliad*; which is ſo nicely connected, one Incident or Circumſtance

ſo naturally and orderly depending on another, that each Part ſerves to ſtrengthen and illuſtrate the other; and the whole leads to a Demonſtration of the Author's firſt Propoſition, to wit, that the Wrath of *Achilles* occaſioned many and grievous Miſeries to the *Greeks*. Hence we are taught, that Strife and Diſſention, as I have obſerved before, are the certain Ruin of any common Cauſe, State, Kingdom, or Family; that inordinate Affections lead to Vice; that Vice increaſes in its Courſe, inſomuch that one Sin, if I may be allowed the Expreſſion, begets another; and conſequently, ſuch Perſons as give way to their Paſſions and Luſts, become gradually degenerate, fall from bad to worſe, till they are irrecoverably plunged in Guilt and Unhappineſs.

Homer

Homer ſhews us alſo, that the Wrath of God hangs over the Head of the wicked, whether a Nation, King, or private Perſon. God ſends his Judgments upon them, withdraws his Aſſiſtance, fights againſt them, ſends judicial Blindneſs and Hardneſs of Heart upon them, and aſſiſts their Enemies to overthrow them; who, in executing the ſecret Will of Heaven, are themſelves, ſometimes, guilty of the ſame Crimes he made them the Inſtruments to puniſh, and are, in their Turn, chaſtized.

On the other Hand, he ſhews how much good Men, engaged in a righteous Cauſe, are favoured by Heaven. The Way to obtain this Favour he points

out to be by supplicating, and serving God, and the Return to be made by Thankfulness and Praise.

In my next I shall illustrate all this from the Summary of the Poet's Fable.

I am, my dear Nancy,
your affectionate Friend,
J. P.

LETTER XLII.

Oxford, Dec. 29, 1742.

My dear Nancy,

I Received your Letter written on Christmas-Day, and wrote to you the Day after that Date, but I had sealed mine before yours came to hand, so did not chuse to open it.

I told

Paris was a King's Son, *Helen* a Queen, two of the handſomeſt Perſons in the known World. *Homer* would teach us herein that handſome Men and Women are ſubject to much greater Inconveniencies of this kind, than others. Such a Man has great Advantages over the fair Sex, and ſuch Women are more liable to Flattery, and the Danger of having their Morals ſpoiled by falſe Suggeſtions of intriguing Men; who never fail, when they meet with a Woman of Virtue, to endeavour to reaſon her out of it, before they can hope for Succeſs. Not half ſo much Pains is ordinarily taken on Women who are but homely; and we ſee daily that more fine Women are ruined, than others.

Homer choſe for his Purpoſe two Perſons of ſuch exalted Condition, ſo highly bred,

bred, alike poſſeſſed of ſome Virtues, and yet made the Crime very black for the following Reaſons:

Had they been Perſons of mean Degree, or abandoned Principles, they would not have made ſo deep an Impreſſion on our Minds; nor ſhould we have had that Care or Concern, at leaſt, not that Pity for them, which, in the preſent Caſe, we feel every now and then, to return upon us.

If *Paris* had been a downright Ruffian, and *Helen* a low diſſolute Wretch, they could not have been of any Uſe to the Poet then, or to us now. What can be learned from two People quite ſunk in Debauchery? But theſe, though bad enough, had yet great Remorſes; at leaſt

Helen;

Helen; and *Paris* was not a Ruffian, though he was a Seducer. Now where ſome good Qualities are mixed with bad, where Virtue and Sin ſtruggle together, and ſometimes Honour, ſometimes natural Frailty, gets the better, the Poet can ſhew Human-kind as it is, and place it in a very inſtructive Light; otherwiſe, he cannot.

It was abſolutely neceſſary to make the Crime very provoking, and the Perſon injured of a very diſtinguiſhed Character, elſe the Poet could not, with any due Probability, have brought all *Greece* together in Arms, to revenge the Injury. Had *Helen* been a Perſon of mean Degree, Kings and Princes would not have leagued together to reſent her Huſband's Wrongs;

Wrongs; had the Injury been ſlight, it could not have borne a Quarrel; nor could *Homer* have vindicated his Greeks, whom he is ſo fond of, nor the Gods themſelves, had he built his beautiful Poem on a ſlight Event. Again, if *Paris* had been of low Extraction, whom could the Greeks fight againſt? Not *Troy*—for the whole State and their Allies could not have engaged in the Defence of one who was leſs then a King's Son. In the one Caſe, *Homer* could not have had his Greeks to fight, in the other, he could not have had the Trojans to fight againſt. On the whole, therefore, I hope you will agree with me, that the Bard was moſt judicious in chuſing two Perſons of great Diſtinction, of great Beauty, and guilty of a great Crime, to be the Originals,

whereon

whereon to found his excellent moral Poem.

Adieu, ma Charmante.

J. P.

LETTER XLIII.

Oxford, Jan. 25, 1742-3.

My dear,

I Have the Pleaſure of yours of the 22d, and am very glad to hear you are in good Health. I preſume both your Aunt and Mother are well, ſince you mention nothing to the contrary.

It would be very agreeable to me that you write of the *Odyſſey*. Your laſt Letter on *Homer* was of the 14th of *December*; ſo that Correſpondence has been long

long ſuſpended. In my next I ſhall reſume my Obſervations on the *Iliad*; but ſhall now contract them as much as poſſible, there being many Things in Mr. *Pope*'s Remarks, which anticipate what I ſhould otherwiſe have obſerved.

I did indeed expect a longer Letter from you, at leaſt two or three ſhort ones—a Method that I ſhall purſue hereafter. Nothing damps the Spirit, wherewith a Correſpondence ſhould be kept alive, ſo much as neglecting to write a little, becauſe you have not Leiſure for a great deal. Remember this Maxim, and purſue it.

My

My humble Service, and believe me to be, my dear little Angel,

Your ſincere Friend,

J. P.

LETTER XLIV.

Oxon. Jan. 26, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

PUrſuant to my Promiſe of yeſterday, I ſit down to give you only a ſhort Letter. I now return to *Homer*.

I would have you read over my former Obſervations on this Subject, when you peruſe this Letter. In the tenth Year of the War between the two Nations, we have ſeen the *Greeks* ſit down before

before *Troy*. *Homer*'s Poem begins here, and the Circumſtance wherewith he opens it, is the Diſſention which happens between *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*. This fatal Difference had almoſt ruined the *Greeks*. It aroſe, you remember, from *Agamemnon*'s Refuſal to accept Ranſom for the Prieſt of *Apollo*'s Daughter, only becauſe he loved her better than his own Wife. He affronts the Prieſt, abuſes and threatens the Augur *Calchas*, calling him a falſe Interpreter of the Will of Heaven. Hereupon a Quarrel ariſes between the King and *Achilles*. They inſult and defy each other, till, in the End, *Agamemnon* takes from him his Captive *Briſeis*.

What we have to remark on this Event is well worth Notice: we ſee *Agamemnon*

memnon fall into the very Crime which he came to revenge. How highly natural! There is nothing more common in ordinary Life, than to ſtumble into the ſame Faults and Errors, for which we condemn others. How blind and partial are we to ourſelves! How quick-ſighted to thoſe around us! Both Men and Women are equally culpable in this Reſpect. You remember *Congreve's Amoret*,

She loves herſelf, yet others hates,
For that which in herſelf ſhe prizes.

Adieu, ma très chere!

J. P.

LET-

LETTER XLV.

Oxford, Jan. 27, 1742-3.

My dear,

THOSE human Frailties I was upon in my laſt, Partiality to ourſelves and Uncharitableneſs to our Neighbour, are the Cauſes of more than half the Miſchief that happens in the World. Hence it was, that our *Saviour* perpetually preached the Non-Reſentment and Forgiveneſs of Offences. Nothing can ſo much contribute to the Peace of Mankind. To return to *Homer*.

We ſee this inordinate Affection in *Agamemnon* betrayed him into Paſſion, Rudeneſs, and Injuſtice; and theſe brought

brought on Misery. What Insults did he not undergo? What stinging Reproaches did he not endure? To what Grief, Shame, and Repentance, was he not exposed? In what Calamities did he not involve his Army? How was he constrained to court and sue to *Achilles?* And how were his Supplications rejected, and his Proffers scorned? Here is a natural Connection between his Crime, and the sad Effects of it.

Observe likewise, his Crime was not only punished in its own Consequences, but by the absolute Interposition of Heaven. The Plague is sent upon the *Greeks*, and Burials are heaped on Burials. This is exactly conformable to what our holy Religion teaches; namely, that one Sin naturally draws on another,

ther, and that the End and Wages of Sin, are Death or Miſery. Beſide this inherent Puniſhment, God ſometimes ſends immediate Vengeance. Being eſſentially merciful, he begins with milder Judgments; but upon Obſtinacy and Impenitence he pours forth the Fullneſs of his Wrath. In *Pope*'s Notes, you ſee the Conformity of the Procedure in this Plague, to that inflicted on *Pharaoh*.

It is obſervable, that *Agamemnon* fell into a Crime of the ſame Nature with that of *Paris*, but not near ſo heinous in Degree: the Puniſhments therefore were only proportionable. *Troy* was utterly deſtroyed, for the atrocious Crime of that People, and their obſtinate Continuance in it. The *Greeks* ſuffered ſeverely,

verely, but were not deſtroyed; for-asmuch as their Crime, or Perſeverance therein, was not ſo flagrant.

We gather alſo from this excellent Poem, that People are oft involved in the Vices and Puniſhments of their Princes. A wicked King is not only a Plague in himſelf to his Subjects, but, in his Sins, he calls down Judgments upon them. This is confirmed in the Scriptures, as well as in *Homer*. For inſtance, in the 2d Book of *Kings*, Chap. xxiv. we read,

"Surely at the Commandment of the "*Lord* came this upon *Judah*, to remove "them out of his Sight, for the Sins of "*Manaſſeh*, according to all that he did."

" And alſo for the innocent Blood " that he ſhed, (for he filled *Jeruſalem* " with innocent Blood) which the *Lord* " would not pardon."

The holy Writings teach us that Children are puniſhed for the Faults of their Parents. *Homer* ſhews us the ſame.

We often ſee Children unaccountably (as far as Appearance goes) involved in the Faults of their Parents, and ſuffering on their Account; it appears ſtrange, at firſt, but on due Reflection, we muſt allow there is nothing more natural, in the common Courſe of Things, than that the Sins of a Parent ſhould fall heavy on a Child. There is ſuch a Connection between them, the one is ſo much a

Part

Part of the other, that this Conſequence can hardly be avoided; at leaſt, in many Inſtances.

The Scriptures teach us, that *God* makes one People the Inſtrument of his Vengeance on another, and again contrary-wiſe. "*Ephraim* ſhall deſtroy *Manaſſeh*, "and *Manaſſeh Ephraim*;" and it is ſaid to the People of *Iſrael*,

"You ſhall be a Scourge and a Plague "to the Heathen that are about you, "and they ſhall be a Scourge to you."

Nothing can be more natural or more juſt, with reſpect to two guilty Nations. *Homer* enforces the ſame; the *Trojans* and *Greeks* are both guilty, but not

 equally;

equally; they are both punished, but not equally; only in Proportion to the Size and Aggravation of their Crimes, and they were made reciprocally the Means of each other's Punishment. Through the whole Bible, particularly in the Prophets, and more especially in *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, this Doctrine is strongly inculcated.

How amazingly great then is *Homer!* We find a Heathen, through the Strength and Justness of his own Conceptions and Sentiments, agree almost in every Point with "the Word of God." And by the Tenor of the whole, his *grande Morale* is fully evinced; namely,

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετω Βυλή.

"The Counsel of God was accomplished."

I wish

I wiſh you Health and Happineſs. Believe me to be,

My dear Angel,

your

J. P.

LETTER XLVI.

Oxford, Jan. 28, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

I'LL let *Homer* ſtand ſtill a while, and give you a ſhort Deſcription of *Oxford.*

On the Road from *London,* we come firſt within Sight of the City, at about two Miles Diſtance, on the Top of a pretty high Hill, called *Shoot-over-Hill.* Here we have a View of the River, with

the plain Country embanking it, and on either Hand a Range of Hills. The River below *Oxford* is called the *Thames*, but at *Oxford* there are two Rivers, that on the Weſt is called the *Iſis*, that on Eaſt the *Cherwell*. The one comes from the North, the other, to wit, *Iſis*, from the North Weſt. They meet at *Oxford*, which ſtands in the Point between them, on a little riſing Ground, ſurrounded with Rivers and Meadows on the Eaſt, Weſt, and South, and with fine Corn Fields on the North. Beyond thoſe Meadows and Rivers are two Tracts of pretty high Hills, covered with Paſture, Corn, and Woods intermixed. When you come within View of the Town from *Shoot-over-Hill*, it ſtrikes you very agreeably with a great Number of public Build-

ings, ſuch as Churches, Colleges, Schools, the Theatre, Printing-Houſe, Dr. *Ratcliffe*'s Library, *&c.*

Juſt as you enter *Oxford* from *London*, you croſs the *Cherwell* by a Bridge, thence aſcend gradually to the Middle of the Town; then you deſcend as gradually, till you come to the *Iſis*, over which you paſs by ſeveral Bridges. The many Canals, into which theſe two Rivers have been cut, have been the Occaſion of ſo many Bridges about *Oxford*.

Their private Buildings are but ordinary; but the great Number of public Buildings, the Squares, Avenues of Trees, the Gardens, Groves, fine Walks, and beautiful Country around, make it a

The *University* here is one of the moſt famous in the World: it is a Place for Education in all the liberal Sciences. For this Purpoſe, there are no leſs than ſeventy Colleges, and five or ſix Halls, where Inſtructors in theſe reſpective Branches reſide; namely, for Divinity, Logic, Phyſic, Anatomy, Aſtronomy, Law, Rhetoric, and Languages. Each of theſe Colleges is a Building by itſelf, and many of them are very ſtately. Each is likewiſe a ſeparate Society by itſelf, governed by its own Laws and Cuſtoms, under its own particular Charter; and the whole, incorporated into one great Body, is called the *Univerſity*. Hence they derive great Privileges. The City of *Oxford* is ſubject to them: they ſend Members to Parliament; and every College

lege has a particular Founder, as a King, Queen, or other diſtinguiſhed Perſonage.

Thoſe who have built and firſt ſettled Endowments on Colleges, are called the Founders; thoſe who have left Sums of Money, Lands, or Books, ſince their Foundation, are ſtiled Benefactors.

The Halls were originally Buildings belonging to ſome particular Colleges, though ſeparated from them, and were erected for the Conveniency of lodging Students, when the Colleges were too much crowded; or for the Reception of the Sons of great Men, who did not like to be confined to ſtrict College-Hours. But now Things are altered.

Some

Some of the Halls have been turned into Colleges, and others are wholly independent of them.

You desire, perhaps, to know the Difference between these Buildings.

A College is a Body corporate within themselves, who have a Charter of their own, and can buy and sell, take and enjoy by Gift or Legacy, in their own Name. The Charter is a Grant from the King.

A Hall has one Head or Chief, in the same Manner as a College, and, like that, is also a Part of the University. It has its own Rules, Orders, and Government, but no Charter, consequently is not

not a Body Corporate within itſelf. The Society poſſeſs no Lands nor Rents, nor can they take and enjoy, like a College, in their own Name. When any thing is given or bequeathed for their Uſe, they cannot hold it themſelves, but muſt lodge it in the Univerſity for their Uſe.

There are many good Schools in *London*, but not an Univerſity. The Reaſon is plain. *London* is a Place of great Hurry and Buſineſs, full of Temptations and Avocations. *Oxford* is a retired Place, ſurrounded with Gardens, Woods, Groves, Hills, Meadows, and Rivers.

Theſe Scenes the Muſes haunt, and Phœbus loves.

at leaſt ſo the Poets tell us.

Adieu,

Adieu, ma Charmante; et ſoyez bien perſuadée que je ſuis tant à vous que vous etes à moi. Faites mes Complements à Madame votre Mere et Tante, et M. M.

Le vôtre,

J. P.

P. S. I forgot to mention to you the public Schools and Libraries, the fine Theatre, the Printing-Houſe, and Muſeum, the Place where the Rarities are kept. There is a Chief, or Head, in every College and Hall. In ſome he is called the *Maſter*, in others the *Principal*, in others the *Provoſt*, and in Chriſt Church he is called the *Dean*.

LET-

LETTER XLVIII.

Oxon. Feb. 7, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

I TOOK Notice to you formerly, that not alone the fine Moral, and the great and important Subject of *Homer*'s Poem was to be admired, but alſo his judicious Manner of conducting it, and the Beauty of the whole Contexture of his Fable or Story; whence it is not only pleaſant as well as profitable, but from being pleaſant, it makes a deeper Impreſſion on our Memories, and we recollect it with continual Satisfaction *.

Homer

* The Writer ſeems admirably to have adopted this agreeable Precept in his own Practice. He catches hold of every Opportunity to throw in that Simpli-

Homer has made uſe of wonderful Stratagems for this Purpoſe. The Enumeration of the Ships, the Names of the Commanders, the geographical Deſcription of the ſeveral Countries they came from; the characteriſtic Diſtinction of the Leaders; the nice Plot contrived to give us an Idea even of the Make and Shape of their Perſons, in bringing *Helen* to

Simplicity and Playfulneſs, which make Inſtruction moſt engaging. A Tribute of this Kind is paid to the Memory of Mr. *Savage*, in an elegant Latin Inſcription, in the Cloiſter of *Weſtminſter Abbey*. The Monument is ſaid to be erected by the Scholars of that Foundation. From this Inſcription I have taken my Motto for this Work, the Turn of it being ſo immediately adapted to our Tutor's Diſpoſition. May I be forgiven, if I here ſubjoin the whole, and preſume to add an humble Imitation of it in Engliſh, which I have been induced to attempt, merely from the Delight I have taken in the Original?

INSCRIP-

to deſcribe them to old *Priam*; the engaging of *Paris* and *Menelaus* firſt, then of *Ajax* and *Hector*, in ſingle Battle; the manifeſt Advantage he gives to *Menelaus*, and a ſort of Advantage to *Ajax*, though not great; the *Trojans* breaking

INSCRIPTION.

Tu noſtræ Memor uſque Scholæ, dum Vita manebat,
Muſa nec immemores nos ſinit eſſe tui.
Ipſe Loci Genius te mœret Amicus Amicum,
Et Luctu Pietas nos propiore ferit.
Nobiſcum aſſueras docto pueraſcere Luſu,
Fudit & ingenios cruda Stnecta Sales.
Chare Senex, Puer hoc te ſaltem Carmine donat,
Ingratum Pueri nec tibi Carmen erit.

IMITATION.

While Life remain'd, our School with heedful Eye
Didſt thou regard, and thy lov'd Memory
(So the Muſe bids) with us ſhall never dye.
The very Genius of the Place complains,
As Friend for Friend laments, in mournful Strains,
And Piety, but aggravates our Pains.
How wouldſt thou ſport with us in learned Play,
And ſage Advice in Wit's light Strains convey!
A Pupil gives this grateful Verſe to thee,
Nor can a Pupil's Verſe unwelcome be.

the

the Truce, wounding *Menelaus*, and refuſing to reſtore *Helen*—All theſe ſerve to vindicate the Greeks, and aſcribe Blame to the Trojans.

Obſerve that, though ſeveral of the Grecian Heroes have, now and then, the Advantage over *Hector*, yet he, in his Turn, has the Advantage over every one of them. This is, that the Poet may give the greater Honour to *Achilles*, who is the only Man deſigned at laſt to conquer *Hector*; and not even then without the Aſſiſtance of a Deity, nor till Heaven had abandoned *Hector*. We ſee too that *Hector*, though the beſt Man among all the Heroes, either Greek or Trojan, and the Man whom *Jupiter* loves for his Piety and other Virtues, was yet involved

in

in the common Calamity. He fought, 'tis true, from Love to his Country and Family, but he fought on the wrong Side. How agreeable this to the holy Scripture! There we find national Sins draw down Judgments on ſuch particular Perſons as are, no Matter by what Means, involved therein.

The Caſe of good old *Priam* ſeems to be the ſame with that of good old *Eli*. Though *Priam* approved not of his Son *Paris*'s Crime, yet he was indulgent to him, and did not compel him to do Juſtice. Herein his Default was paralliel to that of *Eli*, of whom the Lord ſays to *Samuel*,

" I will judge his Houſe for ever, for " the Iniquity which he knoweth; be-

" cauſe

" cauſe his Sons made themſelves vile,
" and he reſtrained them not. *Sam.* B. I.
" C. i. Ver. 13."

It is worth your while to read this whole Chapter and that preceding it.

In Mr. *Pope*'s Notes you will read the ſeveral Inſtances of *Homer*'s Judgment in the whole Conduct of his Story, ſo I need not repeat them. I ſhall mention only two.

You know it is a Proof of great Judgment in a Poet, to ſuit every Circumſtance with Propriety, and to make his Perſonages act in Character. There is an Inſtance of the former, when *Homer*, to relieve us from the Fury of a Battle,

brings

brings in his Heroes in a ſort of Parley, as that between *Glaucus* and *Diomede*, to which I refer you. Another Inſtance is in his fit Diſpoſal of Time, as Mr. *Pope* has obſerved, in that buſy Night, which preceded *Hector*'s breaking in upon the Grecian Intrenchments.

To illuſtrate his Perſons acting up to Character, conſider the Care and Concern *Neſtor* is in, when the Embaſſy is ſent to *Achilles*. You know the Embaſſadors were *Ulyſſes*, *Phœnix*, and *Ajax*. Obſerve their different Characters, their different Modes of Behaviour; the different Impreſſions their Speeches made on *Achilles*, and the different Treatment he gave them. Again, obſerve the different Demeanour of the Grecian Heroes

roes on that melancholy Night, when (as the Poet expreſſes it)

Hector's *Approach in ev'ry Wind they hear,*
And Hector's *Fury ev'ry Moment fear.*

All this is worthy to be remarked with the utmoſt Care. It is admirably fine, and proves to what a great Degree *Homer* has kept up to what the Critics call MORES, the MANNERS.

I am,

my deareſt,

yours,

J. P.

By way of Poſtſcript to my Letter of this Day, I ſhall add a few Lines.

You

You ſee, through the whole *Iliad*, that the Gods always refuſed the Prayers and Supplications of wicked Men, eſpecially thoſe who continued in their wicked Courſes. I need not quote Examples. We ſee the ſame verified in many Paſſages of the Scripture, and it is confirmed by no leſs an Author than *Our Saviour*.

" Not every one that ſaith unto me, " Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the " Will of my Father that is in Hea- " ven."

The great Moral of the *Iliad* was confirmed by the ſad Experience of After-times; and one would almoſt think that *Homer* had foreſeen for *Philip* of

Macedon, as well as the Kings of *Syria* and *Perſia*. The Romans, after taking Advantage of the Diſſenſions that aroſe among the Greeks, or of thoſe they ſowed among them, themſelves fell a Prey to other Nations at laſt; and this will certainly happen to be the Caſe of the *United Provinces* one Time or other, unleſs they continue to be more wiſe and virtuous than any States ever were, united in the ſame Manner as they *are*.

Now, my dear, I ſhould be glad you would let me know what you next wiſh to converſe about in this Manner. As I read *Homer* through, I ſhall hint to you ſuch particular Beauties as I occaſionally meet.

You

You do not tell me whether or no you have the little Eſſay on Epic Poetry before your *Telemaque*. Be ſure to write me what you like beſt in the *Odyſſey*, as you read it; but don't confine yourſelf to that, and read it only when you pleaſe. To reliſh what we read, and profit by it, we ſhould ſit down to it with an Inclination.

Adieu, ma très chère Nannette, et ſoyez perſuadée que je vous aime tant que j'aime mes yeux.

J. P.

LETTER XLIX.

Oxon. Feb. 10, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

I DARE ſay you are beginning to be weary of *Homer*, as well as you love him, and of the many Obſervations we have made, therefore we will drop him after this and my next Letter—at leaſt for ſome Time, and find another Subject for our epiſtolary Converſation.

In the mean Time, pleaſe to obſerve that when *Achilles* was reconciled to *Agamemnon*, it was not either that his Anger was abated, or that the Love of his Country or his Countrymen got the better

ter of it, but another Piece of Reſentment and Deſire of Revenge got the better of the former, as it was incompatible with the other. And this new Reſentment of his was ſtill more furious than the firſt, and much more unreaſonable; for certainly *Hector* was in the right to kill *Patroclus*; and though *Achilles* might lament the Death of his Friend, yet there was no Reaſon for his exerciſing ſuch a brutal Paſſion againſt a fair Enemy.

You will find this very agreeable to the Accounts we have in the Holy Scriptures of the Diſpenſations of God, who makes every thing, even the Sins and Follies of People, contribute to advance and bring about the Completion of his

ſacred Purpoſes and Will. It ſtill ſerves too to illuſtrate his *grande Morale*, which he never loſes Sight of,

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο Βυλή·

The Jews, when they cried out againſt our Saviour, *Crucify him, crucify him*, little dreamed that they were forwarding the Salvation of Mankind; nor had *Judas* any ſuch Deſign when he betrayed him; neither did the High Prieſt know the grand Import of his own Words, when he ſaid, "It was expedient for "one Man to die for the People."

Thus Providence puniſhed the Greeks by the Fierceneſs of *Achilles*; and by that very Fierceneſs ſaved them, when reconciled to them. Many are the Inſtances

ſtances of this Kind in the ſacred Writings. *David* ſays,

"The Wrath of Man ſhall turn to "thy Praiſe, and the Reſidue thereof thou "ſhalt reſtrain."

Another Thing very well worth obſerving, and which is ſtill a great Proof and Illuſtration of the Truth of the above Moral, is this: *Homer* never brings any great Event to bear, any fortunate Act to be performed, or noble Virtue exerciſed, without the Aſſiſtance of a divine Power. When his Heroes fail, it is becauſe the *Gods* have forſaken them. Do they ſucceed? It is becauſe the *Gods* are with them. Do they act prudently? The *Gods* inſpire them. Do they act foolihly?

The *Gods* blind them. But then it is as obſervable, that this is the Reſult of their own Conduct and Principles. There is a Something in their Minds which renders them either dear or deteſtable to the Deities. This is agreeable to the whole Tenour of the Old Teſtament, as you may read in an hundred Inſtances of the Kings of *Iſrael*, *Juda*, *Syria*, &c. &c.

Laſtly, you ſee the Means of acquiring the Favour of the Supreme was, next to a virtuous Life, beſpeaking him by Prayer. This is the Practice of all *Homer*'s great Men; and the Succeſs of their Undertakings was always accompanied with Sacrifices of Praiſe and Thankſgiving. This was underſtood to be

be an indiſpenſable Return of Duty and Gratitude to the Gods. When *Hector* eſcapes ſafe from *Diomede*, the latter cries out,

Once more thank Phœbus *for thy forfeit Breath,*
Well by Apollo *are thy Pray'rs repaid.*

And *Jupiter* ſays, in more Places than one, when ſpeaking in *Hector*'s Favour, "That "he had offered many Sacrifices to the "Deities."

Thus as theſe Heroes imputed the Eſcape of their Enemies to ſome God, ſo when they expreſſed their Hopes of getting the better of them, they are frequently accuſtomed to ſay, "If ſuch or "ſuch a God aſſiſt me." Herein they conformed to the Phraſe in Scripture; "They did not put their Truſt in their

" own Swords or Bows." *Virgil* has given us an Inſtance of an Hero, 'tis true, who did put his Truſt in his own Strength. I mean *Mezentius*. " My " own right Hand (ſays he) is my God, " and the Dart I am going to throw." But *Virgil* took Care beforehand to repreſent him a moſt impious Wretch, and a Tyrant, and makes his End ſuitable to his bad Character.

Now, my dear, fearing I have ſufficiently tired you, I will add no more, but that I am

your faithful
and moſt affectionate Friend,
J. P.

LET-

LETTER L.

Oxon. Feb. 11, 1742-3.

THIS ſubſequent Letter may more properly be ſtiled a Poſtſcript to to the foregoing; wherein I forgot to obſerve to you, that when the Purpoſe of Heaven was fulfilled by the Reſentment of *Achilles* againſt *Hector*, the former was checked in his Career before the half of his Reſentment was ſatisfied. He had doomed the Body of *Hector* to be without Burial and funeral Honours; to be left a Prey to Dogs and Vultures; but *Jove* and the other Gods would not permit that. *Hector* was dear to them on Account of his Piety. *Jove* would

have him buried honourably, and *Achilles* was obliged to let go his Hold. Herein the Reſidue of his Wrath was reſtrained, Heaven having no further Uſe for it; and herein alſo is verified another Paſſage in Scripture,

"Precious in the Sight of the Lord "is the Death of his Saints." *Pſ.* cxvi. *Ver.* 15.

I am,

my dear Nancy,

ever yours,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER LI.

Oxon. Feb. 12, 1742-3.

My dear,

I SAID, in a former Letter, that I had done with *Homer*, but I find I have not.

In order to make his Morals, or the Application of his Doctrine, reliſh better, he has beautifully diverſified his Story. He has introduced many Epiſodes that are very delightful: for Example, that which *Glaucus* tells to *Diomede*, that which *Phœnix* tells to *Achilles*, that which *Neſtor* relates, and many others. Obſerve too, they are always told in a proper

proper Place, and always recommend ſome Virtue, or arraign ſome Vice.

Many of his Epiſodes and other Stories have alſo the ſame Tendency with the great Deſign; that is to ſay, to ſhew the ill Effects of Diviſion, Reſentment, and obſtinate Revenge, particularly that of *Phœnix* to *Achilles*; or to ſhew us that inordinate Luſts, Affections, or Appetites, lead to Sin and Miſery; or to illuſtrate the *grande Morale*, "That God's "Will muſt be accompliſhed, and his "Counſel muſt ſtand." And by continually mixing theſe Stories in his Work, he calls up our Attention to the great Purpoſe of it.

Beſides this great Purpoſe, he gives us occaſional Precepts; Inſtances of what

is

is fit, decent, prudent, and of their Contraries. He ſets before our Eyes many beautiful and uſeful Things in Nature, as of the Heavens, the Earth, rural Labours, Winter, Summer, Harveſt, Rocks, Mountains, Rivers, Seas, *&c.* as likewiſe of artificial Things, namely, of War, Peace, Commerce, *&c.* But I refer you to what Mr. *Pope* has ſaid hereon.

The laſt Thing that I ſhall deſire you to obſerve, is this. Though the main Deſign of the *Iliad* is to ſhew us that Miſery flows from Sin, and Sin from unbridled Appetites, yet he therein preſents us with many Inſtances of Happineſs and Succeſs flowing from doing our Duty; and contrary-wiſe in the *Odyſſey*, though

though the main Tendency of that Poem be to ſhew that Happineſs flows from a Diſcharge of our Duty to God and Man, (which is the Conſequence of ſubduing our Paſſions) yet he mixes, in the Courſe of his Story, frequent Inſtances of Miſery ariſing out of Sin.

To conclude—I fancy to myſelf that I ſee *Homer*, like a moſt renowned old Philoſopher, or one of the ancient Prophets, preaching to his Countrymen in this Manner—" Learn, O my Countrymen, that all Unhappineſs proceeds from Sin, and Sin proceeds from inordinate Affections. Learn that all Happineſs proceeds from Virtue, and Virtue from hearkening to the Dictates of Reaſon; that in the one Caſe God will aſſiſt you,

in

in the other, deſert you. To obtain his Aſſiſtance, you muſt depend on him; you muſt aſcribe all to him that you do well; you muſt apply to him by fervent Prayer; and not that alone, but you muſt leave Vice and embrace Virtue, otherwiſe God will not hearken to you, though you make many Prayers; and when he bleſſes and aſſiſts you, you muſt render him the Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving."

"To confirm the firſt of theſe my Doctrines, I will tell you a Story of the Wrath of *Achilles*, and the Quarrel that happened between him and *Agamemnon*, ſupreme Leader of the Grecians, at the Siege of Troy; which, beſides confirming my firſt Doctrine, will plainly prove that

that Diviſions and Diſſenſions among People united in a common Cauſe and Intereſt, though they may conſiſt of many little independent States and Sovereignties, muſt probably be the Ruin of them all. This may be the Caſe of Greece; and you may be ſwallowed up by ſome great Prince or other, if Diviſions be raiſed and encouraged among you."

"To prove my ſecond Doctrine, to wit, that bridling your Paſſions, acting with Patience, Prudence, and Piety, and conſequently having God to favour you, will lead you to Succeſs through the greateſt Difficulties, I will tell you a Story of the Travels of *Ulyſſes*. And from both you may derive this important Truth; namely, that every thing whatſoever is ordered,

dered, disposed, governed, conducted, and established, by the all-wise, all-powerful, and immutably certain Will of God, and must be brought to the Period that he has set and determined."

If you have *Creech's Horace* at Hand, read the second Epistle of his first Book of Epistles. It is inscribed to *Lollius*. You will see there in what View he considers these two Poems.

Adieu.

J. P.

LETTER LII.

Oxon. Feb. 18, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

I AM highly gratified in seeing you take so much Delight in the *Iliad*; particularly in the moral Doctrine inculcated throughout that excellent Poem.

By

By the Earneſtneſs wherewith you deſire me ſtill to continue my Remarks, it ſhould ſeem as if you conceived there were no other Author fit to be the Subject of our epiſtolary Correſpondence. There are many more. Some you have ever at Hand. If you would now and then read the Proverbs of *Solomon*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, and of *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach*, with the Archbiſhop of *Cambray*'s Dialogues, Fables, and Lives of the Philoſophers, they could not miſs to furniſh you with Abundance of Reflections, equally proper for Writing and Converſation; and this they would do without its being neceſſary that you ſhould comment on every Paſſage you read there, or write down every Reflection that preſents itſelf; only ſuch

as

as moſt ſtrongly and naturally affect you.

I am pleaſed with your Obſervations on many of *Homer*'s Beauties. I have gone through the Author, as I have examined them. Theſe added to thoſe of Mr. *Pope*, who has been ſo copiouſly excellent, leave very little for me to ſay; but I will oblige you wherever I can. Nothing has occurred to me till now, with the 9th Book open before me. It would be endleſs to point out every Paſſage I think excellent; I ſhall only confine myſelf to ſuch as I fancy will admit ſome particular Remark or Illuſtration.

The Complaint againſt *Jove*, at Line 25, is what Mankind in general is too guilty

guilty of. We lay to the Charge of God what is our own Fault. *Jeremiah* ſeems to have been exactly in this Predicament, when he ſays, "Why art thou to me as a Lyar? *&c.*"

At Verſe 47, *Diomede* ſays to *Agamemnon*,

Thou firſt, and thou alone, in Fields of Fight,
Durſt brand my Courage, and defame my Might.

He recollects the Reproach caſt on him in a former Book, though at that Time he made no Reply to it. Hence we learn *to take Care what we ſay*; for though we may fancy an Expreſſion forgot, it may return, and be of bad Conſequence, when we leaſt expect it.

Verſe

Verſe 225, *Neſtor* ſays,

Now pray to Jove to grant what Greece demands,
Pray in deep Silence and with pureſt Hands.

This is agreeable to what our Saviour recommends, "When thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet, *&c.*" and *David* ſays, "I will waſh my Hands in Innocency, and ſo will I compaſs thine Altars, O Lord."

In the Beginning of Book the tenth, obſerve with how much Propriety *Agamemnon* is employed, then *Menelaus*, *Diomede*, *Neſtor*, and *Ulyſſes*. The Wiſdom of *Diomede* in chuſing *Ulyſſes* for his Companion, together with the whole Tranſaction of that Night, point out the

the great Uſe of taking Advice and Aſſiſtance in an arduous Enterprize.

Adieu.

J. P.

LETTER LIII.

Oxon. Feb. 23, 1742-3.

NEptune's Progreſs to aſſiſt the Greeks, in Book the Thirteenth, is admirably deſcribed; and Mr. *Pope* has ſhewn us the Affinity between that and a Paſſage in the ſixty-eighth Pſalm, but there are many other Places in the holy Writings wherewith it may be compared. It would be endleſs to enumerate them: they will occur to you in your Peruſal of that ſacred Volume, which is abſurdly given as a Taſk-Book

to

to Children indiſcriminately of all Capacities, when it is an Exerciſe for the moſt adult and experienced Underſtanding *.

If I may be excuſed for ſaying it, I think there are ſome few Faults in Mr. *Pope*'s Tranſlation and Notes in theſe two Books. In Book xiii. Verſe 890,

His troops unpractis'd in the Fights of Stand,

is ſurely a ſtrange Expreſſion.

* What Mr. Preſton ſays here is ſurely no Contradiction to his having recommended the *Bible* to his Pupil, though ſo early as at 10 Years of Age. Be it obſerved that, by his excellent Inſtructions, ſhe had then read other Authors, and was more than capable of digeſting what he propoſed, namely, the *Proverbs*, *Eccleſiaſticus*, &c. He only objected to the abſurd Cuſtom practiſed then, as at this Day, of ſuffering Children *to learn to read* from the Bible; whence they too often contract a Diſtaſte to the moſt edifying and important Volume that can, in the Proceſs of their Lives, be laid before them.

Mr. *Pope's* Note on *Hector's* Reproach to *Paris*, Verſe 964,

Ill-fated Paris, Slave to Womankind, &c.

is not accompanied with his uſual Judgment. *Hector* indeed is bold and impatient—ſo far he may reſemble *Achilles*, but he is neither violent nor unjuſt. Though he was impetuous, yet we ſee, through the whole Book, that he was manageable. *Achilles* never was; and had not *Hector* Cauſe, during the Courſe of the War, to be highly offended at *Paris?*

Book xiv. Verſe 290.

Great Jove awaking, ſhook the bleſt Abodes
With riſing Wrath, and tumbled Gods on Gods.

The latter Part of this Tranſlation I could wiſh not quite ſo *low*; though it is pretty near the Original, which actually

tually ſignifies *throwing the Gods about*, &c. It reminds me of an Expreſſion in *Lee's Oedipus*,

Gods meet Gods, and joſtle in the dark.

I ſhall write you again on Friday. Je ſuis, avec mes Complements, où ils ſont dues, le votre,

J. P.

LETTER LIV.

Oxon. Feb. 25, 1742-3.

My Dear,

I HAVE now re-peruſed the 15th and 16th Books of the *Iliad*. Your own Obſervations on theſe are remarkably good; therefore I have very little to ſay.

In Verſe 86. Book xv. the Swiftneſs of a God compared to that of the Thought of Man, is inimitably beautiful. Mr.

Pope has juſtly remarked it, but a much inferior Genius could not have overlooked it.

In Verſe 428, we find *Neſtor* placing the Confidence of his Prayer in his Piety towards the Gods, which confirms one of *Homer*'s great moral Rules, and which I have touched upon in a former Letter.

Book xvi. Verſe 9. This Simile is extremely ſtriking. Literally rendered from the Greek it would run thus,

" No Child that runs after its Mother,
" and holds her faſt by the Robe, and
" hinders her from proceeding, and
" looks up in her Face, weeping to
" make her take it in her Arms, *&c.*"

You

You cannot imagine how beautiful it is in the Original.

In Verſe 40. *Homer* now makes the ſame Implication in the Perſon of *Patroclus*, that he did formerly in the Perſon of *Phœnix*; namely, the Obſtinacy of *Achilles*, and the ill Conſequences thereof. This is an Epitome of the whole Scope of the Poem, which, as Mr. *Pope* remarks, *Homer* every now and then introduces, to fix our Attention to his great Deſign.

In my preceding Letter I endeavoured to diſtinguiſh the Diſpoſition of *Hector* from that of *Achilles*. In Verſe 122. we have a ſtrong Inſtance of the ſavage Temper of the latter. How unlike the pious *Hector!*

Verſe 837. This Deſcription of *Patroclus*, beſides being admirably beautiful, conveys an excellent Moral.

I have juſt received yours, but have not yet had Time to read it all. Adieu, juſqu'à Dimanche.

I am

your affectionate

J. P.

LETTER LV.

Oxon. Feb. 27, 1742-3.

My dear Nancy,

SINCE I wrote you laſt, which was on Friday, I have peruſed two Books more of the *Iliad*, accompanied with your Obſervations.

The

The Conflict at Verſe 418. Book xvii. about the Body of *Patroclus* is wonderfully fine. How naturally is it compared to Fires, that riſe and ſink by Turns! *Homer* ſeems fond of the Image himſelf, for he repeats it in Book xviii. Indeed the whole Struggle, from the Time *Patroclus* was killed, till *Achilles* appeared, is moſt admirably deſcribed.

Book xviii. Verſe 7.

Penſive he ſate; for all that Fate deſign'd
Roſe in ſad Proſpect to his boding Mind.

This Picture of *Achilles* is moſt affectingly fine. But here I will preſume to ſay we may prove Mr. *Pope* to have been wrong in his Remark on a former Book, where he avers, "It was Jealouſy of his

Honour, that made *Achilles* lay his Commands on *Patroclus* not to fight with *Hector.*" We ſee here that he immediately imagines him to have been ſlain; whence it appears more probable, that his warning him to ſhun *Hector*'s Force, was from Apprehenſion of the Conſequences, not Jealouſy of the Motive.

Verſe 547. Here are four admirable Lines. The Deſcription of the Shield is admirable throughout. What Mr. *Pope* himſelf has ſaid about it, and what he has quoted from others, will, in great Meaſure, give you a true Taſte of Sculpture and Painting, and deſerves to be read often.

I am,

my dear Nancy,

yours truly,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER LVI.

Oxon. Feb. 7, 1742-3.

My Dear,

I HAVE now gone through another Book of *Homer*, and made the following Remarks.

Book xix. Verſe 57. *Achilles* confirms the Obſervation I formerly made; namely, that it was not the Love of his Country, but a new Reſentment, that incited him; and though he preaches here againſt Reſentment and obſtinate Fury, yet it is obſtinate Fury which here poſſeſſes him, and actually makes him preach againſt it.

Verſe 81. *Agamemnon* in his Speech confirms your Obſervation, laying the Blame of his Folly on Fate, and the Gods, and thinks thereby to clear himſelf of the Imputation. I think the Story he tells here, though to the Purpoſe, might have been ſpared. Mr. *Pope* obſerves very juſtly, that *Homer* always regards due Decorum. He makes *Achilles* riſe, but *Agamemnon* ſit ſtill.

Verſe 281. Here *Achilles* imputes the Blame of his own Folly to *Jove*, as *Agamemnon* did before; and herein, as in other Inſtances, it may be ſaid that *Homer* means to remind us of the great Tendency of his Poem; for he tells us, it was the high Will of *Jove* that doomed their Strife, and doomed the Greeks to fall.

Book

Book xx. Verſe 335. I think what *Dionyſius* of *Halicarnaſſus* has ſaid in this Note is very reaſonable, and as ſtrong as any thing Mr. *Pope* has ſaid againſt it. How the Fact really was is hard to know at this Diſtance of Time.

I ſhall finiſh what I have to ſay on the *Iliad* in two more Letters, I believe, and hope to conclude this Week.

I am,
my dear Nancy,
yours,
J. P.

LETTER LVII.

Oxon. March 2, 1742-3.

AT the Beginning of Book the Twenty-firſt, the Deſcription of the Flood endeavouring to drown *Achilles* is the Produce of a vaſt Imagination. The Compariſon at Verſe 14, is admirable, as is alſo the Conflagration, and the Effect it had on the Fiſhes.

But, with Submiſſion, I think all the Scuffle between *Juno* and *Diana*, Verſe 558, very ridiculous.

Verſe 608. This Compariſon, and the Note upon it, proves, what I have often obſerved,

obſerved, a Conformity between *Homer* and our Holy Scripture.

Book xxii. Verſe 221. A further Confirmation how dear are pious Men to God.

Verſe 278. Read the Notes here. Methinks Mr. *Pope* or *Euſtathius* overacts the Defence of *Homer* in this Place *. They explain the ſupernatural Aſſiſtances which *Achilles* receives, into Allegory; yet affirm the like, when ſhewn to *Hector*, to be real, merely to favour, or rather to aggrandize the Valour of *Ajax* and *Achilles*.

* The Note here entirely belongs to *Euſtathius*; *Pope* is not actually, only negatively, involved in it, merely by not having contradicted what was aſſerted by the other.

Verſe

Verſe 628. Here is ſurely one of the moſt beautiful Paſſages in the whole *Iliad*; and what *Andromache* obſerves and complains of, we find verified to this Day. It ever has, and will be ſo.

The Lamentations of *Priam*, *Hecuba*, and *Andromache*, in this Book, and thoſe of *Hecuba*, *Helen*, and *Andromache*, in the laſt, are all different; they ariſe from different Motives, and each Perſon utters what immediately belongs to his or her Character and Circumſtances; a further Proof how judiciouſly *Homer* has preſerved the *Manners* throughout his Poem. It is again evinced in Book xxiii. Verſe 41. The Behaviour of *Achilles* in this Place how very conſiſtent! The Appearance of the Ghoſt of *Patroclus*, and all that paſſes, is extremely fine.

In

In the Detail of Prizes given to the Racers, at the funeral Games, obſerve the following Lines;

A Woman for the firſt, in Beauty's Bloom,
Skill'd in the Needle and the lab'ring Loom.

Do they not imply, with many other Paſſages in this Poem, that Women, how beautiful ſoever, are not prized, without ſome uſeful and laudable Qualification?

Verſe 369. Here we have a beautiful Picture of an old Man inſtructing his Son how to win the Prize; and we alſo diſcern with what an extenſive Genius *Homer* was bleſſed; for the Rules that *Neſtor* gave, being univerſally uſeful, are as much in Force now as they were then.

The

The Obſervation on Line 817, by Madame *Dacier*, and *Pope*'s ſubjoined Sneer, are, in my Opinion, equally nonſenſical.

The Note on Verſe 973, beginning at theſe Words, "But alſo his Deſign "might be to compliment the Greeks, "*&c.*" is by no Means juſt, and even contradicts what the Author has often ſaid of *Ajax*.

To return to the very firſt Note on this Book, I cannot concur with Mr. *Pope*'s Opinion in Defence of *Homer*'s Conduct, in carrying on his Work for two Books after the Death of *Hector*. He urges that *Homer*'s Undertaking was to deſcribe the Anger of *Achilles*, and as that

Anger

Anger did not die with *Hector*, but perſecuted even his Remains, ſo the Poet ſtill keeps up to his Subject. But Mr. *Pope*, with Deference I ſpeak it, is miſtaken; it is not ſimply the Anger of *Achilles*, that is *Homer*'s Subject, but that particular Anger and Reſentment which was ſo deſtructive to *Greece*, and took Birth from his Diſſenſion with *Agamemnon*. This Subject, after the Death of *Hector*, is entirely exhauſted, and the Revenge then purſued is of a different Nature from the *Wrath* which *Homer* undertook to ſing; for inſtead of being deſtructive, it then becomes advantageous to the Greeks.

In my next I ſhall give you my Opinion of the Reaſons which induced the Author

Author to protract his Work beyond the Death of *Hector*. I thought to have done it here, and ſo have finiſhed this Subject of our Letters, but the Aſſizes are now held in this City. Some Gentlemen from London engage my Time, and an Account I have juſt received of the Duke of *Hamilton*'s Death unnerves my Spirits.

Your laſt is come to Hand; the Matter and Hand-writing pleaſe me infinitely.

Adieu, my deareſt. I will write again on Sunday.

Yours truly,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER LVIII.

Oxford, March 5, 1742-3.

Dear Nancy,

I HAVE now read the *Iliad* to an End, and have but few Remarks to make on the two laſt Books.

Book xxiii. Verſe 41.

The huge Ox bellowing falls; with feebler Cries
Expires the Goat; the Sheep in Silence dies.

Theſe two Lines are a juſt Picture of the Nature of the reſpective Animals. How characteriſtically affecting is the laſt to a tender Mind!

Ver. 120. Here are eight fine Lines, and they ſhew us what was the Creed at that Time.

Time. The laſt, I think, much exceeds the Original.

Theſe two Notes eſcaped me when I wrote laſt, as many other Things do; and indeed Mr. *Pope*'s Excellence in Criticiſm has left very little in the Power of any ſucceeding Commentator. I ſeldom repeat to you what he has ſaid, unleſs I think it ſo remarkable as to deſerve your peculiar Attention.

I now proceed to the twenty-fourth Book, and ſhall conſequently very ſoon put an End to this Subject, which has entertained us ſo long.

Verſe 5. This Deſcription of *Achilles*'s Lamentation is admirable, though the Lines

Lines 17 and 18, are not, in my Judgment, ſo full and ſo expreſſive as in the Original, which is as follows, if literally rendered:

"Sometimes he lay on his Side, ſometimes he turned quickly on his Back, then he lay prone on his Face, and then he ſtood ſtrait up on his Feet."

Verſe 291. This is an exceeding natural Picture of a Perſon, particularly one in Years, overwhelmed with Grief. Mr. *Pope*'s Note is moſt judicious, and well worthy Attention. There is nothing more common than for a Parent, in the firſt Tranſports of Affliction, to prefer a Child that is dead, to all who remain alive.

I have

judiciouſly in protracting the Work, rather than to cloſe it with the Death of *Hector*, as *Virgil* has finiſhed the *Æneid* with that of *Turnus*.

To form a right Judgment hereon, we ſhould conſider the Subjects of the reſpective Poems; that is, what thoſe two great Poets propoſed by them.

The Subject of the *Æneid* is the Atchievements as well as Sufferings of *Æneas*, till he brought about a Settlement in a new Kingdom, for himſelf, his Family, and the People in *Italy*. To the Accompliſhment of all this there was no Obſtruction but the Rivalſhip of *Turnus*; conſequently, on his Death, all

is

is compleated. There was no need to carry the Work further; though one *Maſshæus* has added a thirteenth Book, wherein *Æneas* is married to *Lavinia*. But this is ſuperfluous. The great Obſtacle being removed, the Poet leaves us to imagine all the reſt. What he had propoſed was entirely fulfilled; to wit, all the Sufferings his Hero had to undergo with Seas and Winds, with Men and Gods, and all the croſs Accidents he had to wreſtle with, and bravely ſubdue by his Patience or Exploits. But it is not ſo in the *Iliad*. The Poet there propoſes to ſing the fatal *Conſequences* of the Reſentment of *Achilles*. It was therefore very juſtifiable in him to carry on his Work beyond the Time that Reſentment laſted. If it ought to have ended

with that, there was no Need to make him kill *Hector*; for that Event fell without the Period of his Reſentment to *Agamemnon*, which is the Ground-work of his Poem. But the Poet certainly deſigned to ſhew not only the ſad Diſaſters that befel the *Greeks* through the Reſentment of *Achilles*, but to give ſtill a ſtronger Impreſſion of the bad Effects of Diſſenſion among Chiefs, as well as other Perſons, whoſe Intereſts are united. He paints the great Change of the Grecian Affairs for the better, on his Reconciliation with the Leader of the *Greeks*. The Ships are ſaved, *Hector* is killed, the Trojans are repulſed, and driven within their Town. What follows, namely, the dragging the Coarſe of *Hector* round *Troy*, the Grief and Behaviour of *Achilles* on

the

the Loſs of *Patroclus*, the Inſtitution of the *Games* at his Funeral, all this is in order to compleat the Character of his Hero; to ſhew us his Virtues as well as his Vices. He makes him an extraordinary Perſon both Ways; and yet of vaſt, nay of abſolute Importance to the ſucceſsful Iſſue of the War. He has probably given him this mixed Character, as a Leſſon how Princes and Rulers ought to manage Perſons of great Importance, who have ſtrong Qualities, both good and bad; ſo that they may turn the former to their Advantage, and, by a cautionary Prudence, divert any bad Effects from the latter.

To point out the Importance of *Achilles* ſtill ſtronger, it was neceſſary to ſet

forth that of *Hector*. Though this is done throughout the whole Work, while *Hector* lived, it is not sufficient. The Poet does not stop there. The Circumstances of his Death, the Lamentations of his Father, Mother, Wife, Sister, *Helen*, and the whole People, the Behaviour of the *Grecians*, and indeed *Achilles*'s own Speech, after he had killed him, render him still more important, than all that had been said or described of him before.

Add hereunto the Approbation in which he was held by *Jupiter*, *Apollo*, *Mercury*, and almost all the Gods; their Resentment at *Achilles* on his Account; their compelling the Body to be delivered up to honourable Burial, and *Achilles* himself lifting it on the Bier.

I am

I am apt to think that Piety, which *Homer* has all along recommended, was the great Leſſon he propoſed to inculcate, by this laſt Book. The Praiſes of *Hector* for his Piety occur ſo thick, and the Concern of the Gods for his Death is ſo ſtrongly painted, that one would be tempted to believe *Hector* was as much his Hero as *Achilles*, only of another Kind; and though the Poet condemns the Cauſe he was concerned in, and makes him ſuffer for it, yet he ſeems to be more in Love with him, than with his profeſſed Hero. He does ample Juſtice to his Virtues, and ſeems to make him, much rather than *Achilles*, a Pattern for Imitation.

Remember you are to ſend me your free Opinion on all I have ſaid. I don't deſire you to write very long Letters. Write two or three ſhort ones at different Times, and then put them all under one Cover.

I am,
my dear Nancy,
yours,
J. P.

LETTER LX.

Oxon. March 17, 1742-3.

Dear Nancy,

I Received your Favour of the 14th, but have not yet laid in Proviſion for a Letter on the *Odyſſey*. I have at laſt read

read the two Plays you desired me, *Sir Fopling Flutter* and *Sir Courtly Nice*.

The Man of Mode, or *Sir Fopling Flutter*, was first written. The Author was a high-bred Gentleman; his Characters are well drawn; the Dialogue is easy, natural, and genteel; there is a great deal of Wit and good Sense in the Conversation among the principal Characters, especially between *Dorimant* and *Loveit*, and between the same Gentleman and *Harriet*. *Old Bellair* is very entertaining; he is good-natured, pleasant, open, and sincere: in a Word, he is a downright Country Gentleman, of the best Sort.

If I mistake not, the *Spectator*, long ago, censured this Play, as being built

on a wrong Foundation; for, says he, "the End of it is to promote Vice." *Dorimant*, his fine Gentleman, is a Wit, well bred, of excellent Sense, and extremely engaging, but totally devoid of Faith and Honour. *Harriet*, the fine Lady, is perpetually despising her Mother. The Scene of the Orange-Woman and drunken Shoemaker is too gross, and ought not to have been brought into such polite Company. A Lady of good Quality, and a fine young Heiress, lodging in an Orange-Woman's House, is, I think, wrong judged; and *Dorimant* affirming his Intention of marrying *Harriet* was to repair his Fortune, is, in my Opinion, out of Character; unless that, as a Rake, he thought Shame to own that he was really in Love; but, surely,

ſurely, even that is driving the Rake too far for *Dorimant*.

The *Spectator*, after having remarked ſome Paſſages in this Comedy, adds, "This whole celebrated Piece is a per-"fect Contradiction to good Manners, "good Senſe, and common Honeſty. "Nothing but being loſt to a Senſe of "Innocence and Virtue can make any "one ſee it, without obſerving more "frequent Occaſion to move Sorrow "and Indignation, than Mirth and "Laughter." He had great Reaſon indeed for what he ſaid. The Sufferance of ſuch immoral Pieces perverts the true Intent of the Stage, which was meant to be a Place of inſtructive Amuſement, not empty Diſſipation. That Mr.

Addiſon conſidered it in this Light, is evident, from the two Pieces he gave to the Theatre, *Cato*, and the *Drummer*. The Growth of licentious Pieces is principally, if not altogether, to be aſcribed to the vitiated Taſte of an Audience. The vulgar Expreſſion, "If "there were no Receivers, there would "be no Knaves," may be here not unaptly alluded to: "If there were no En-"couragers of immoral Pieces, none "ſuch would be repreſented." It cannot be doubted but the Regulator of a Theatre would rather deſire to ſee it a Seat of Decorum, than of Licentiouſneſs, or that an Actor would be better pleaſed to utter Sentiments of Truth and Virtue, than thoſe of Vice and Immorality.

The

The other Play, *Sir Courtly Nice*, ſeems to be an Imitation of *The Man of Mode*, though a faint one. Notwithſtanding there are ſome good Things in the former, yet the Characters are not by far ſo genteel, nor is there ſo much Wit or good Senſe in the Dialogue, as in the latter. *Farewel* is a ſort of *Dorimant*, only not vicious. *The Aunt* is a Copy of *Lady Woodvill*, and *Leonora* of *Harriet*. The Contraſt between *Hothead* and *Teſtimony* is diverting, but I cannot think they are naturally brought in. *Sir Courtly Nice* is well drawn, but not ſo delightful a Fop as *Sir Fopling*; nor do I think his Foppery favours ſo much of the "Gentleman." I do not know what to make of *Lord Belguard*. I think him in the main a ſilly Fellow, though perhaps

with ſome Smattering of good Senſe and Breeding. *Hothead*'s Behaviour to him is quite *outrée*, *Crack*'s Character appears overdone, and the unravelling of the Plot not entirely natural. *Surly* altogether is too groſs, though ſome Part of what he he ſays is entertaining enough. There are certainly many worſe Plays. The Purpoſe and Tendency of this Piece being rather good than otherwiſe, gives it, in my Opinion, one material Aſcendancy over *The Man of Mode*.

Perhaps what I have ſaid may engage you to read them over again, and then I ſhall be glad to have your Opinion of them.

I am, my dear,

your ſincere Friend,

J. P.

LET-

LETTER LXI.

Oxon. March 18, 1742 3.

My dear Angel,

I Received a Letter from you juſt as I had finiſhed my laſt, and ſince that I have received yours of the 8th inſtant.

I am exceedingly pleaſed with your Obſervations on the *Odyſſey*; I only regret that you have not made more, and have gone ſo quickly through it. In a late Letter I reminded you of ſome Books which I had mentioned formerly, ſuch as the Bible and Apochrypha, *Rochefaucault*, &c. where you might find very good Subjects for our Converſation.

I have

I have begun to read the *Odyſſey*, but ſhall only, at this Time, take notice of the Obſervation you make on the Anſwer *Telemachus* gives to *Mentes* about the Doubtfulneſs of his Legitimacy. *Pope* ſays, "Whatever Truth there may be "in the Reply, there is very little De- "cency in it." I muſt own myſelf of a different Opinion; I think *Telemachus* rather means a Compliment, than a Reflection on his Mother. The Meaning of the Author, in my Conception, amounts to this. *The Certainty of our Legitimacy depends on the Word and Honeſty of our Mothers. Penelope avows me to be her Son by Ulyſſes; and conſidering the virtuous Character of my Mother, there is no Doubt to be made of my being ſo; her Avowal of it amounts to abſolute Proof.*

Pre-

Prefixed to the *Odyſſey* is an Abſtract from *Boſſu* on Epic Poetry, which, if I had read it before I wrote my Letters on the *Iliad*, would have ſaved me a great deal of what I wrote, as it will many Things which otherwiſe I might write on the *Odyſſey*. It is a moſt excellent Piece, and I would have you read it over and over again.

I remember, when I was very young, the fourteenth Book of the *Odyſſey* pleaſed me peculiarly, and I then minuted down my Obſervations upon it. If I recollect right, it is the Converſation between *Ulyſſes* or *Telemachus*, and *Eumæus*. I have not the Volume at Hand juſt now.

I am

I am mightily pleaſed with your laſt Letter; it is written clean and carefully; the Style is good, and the Obſervations juſt and judicious. I hope to have more ſuch from you ſoon. In every Letter I write, I ſhall tranſmit my Remarks on two Books. You have prevented me in many.

Tell me particularly how your Mama does; and believe me to be,

my dear Nancy,

yours unalterably,

J. P.

LET.

LETTER LXII.

Oxon. March 19, 1742-3.

IN the firſt Book of the *Odyſſey*, we find the Misfortunes that befel the Companions of *Ulyſſes* ſprung from the very Cauſe, whence thoſe in the *Iliad* aroſe, namely, an Offence to the Gods: they had committed an Affront to *Apollo*.

Their impious Folly dar'd to prey
On Herds devoted to the God of Day. B. i. V. 9.

The next Point wherein they reſemble each other is in the Aſſiſtance of Heaven, in all Difficulties, being granted to the virtuous, obtained by Prayer, and returned by Sacrifice and Thankſgiving.

The

The next is in the Vengeance of Heaven on wicked Men. I muſt again recommend to you to read the Abſtract from *Boſſu*, prefixed to the *Odyſſey*. You well obſerve that Hoſpitality is repreſented in a moſt beautiful Light in both Works.

I think all that Mr. *Pope* and the other Commentators have ſaid in the Note on Verſe 240. does not ſatisfactorily account for this Voyage of *Ulyſſes*; and we find the Suitors afterwards drawing the Occaſion of a Jeer from that very Paſſage;

Or comes from Ephyre with Poiſons fraught,
And kills us all in one tremendous Draught?

B. ii. Ver. 270.

To

To remark ſome particular Paſſages, I go back to the firſt Book. The Advice given by *Mentes* to *Telemachus*, Verſe 327, deſerves your cloſeſt Attention. The prudent Caution at Verſe 374,

If yet Ulyſſes views the Light, &c.

is very remarkable.

Book ii. Line 27.

To climb with haughty Fires
The royal Bed, &c.

has been much criticized, and not without Reaſon. There is ſomething rather too free in the Expreſſion.

What a natural and affecting Picture is given of the old Nurſe, Verſe 406.

She filled the Walls with Cries,
And Tears ran trickling from her aged Eyes.

The

The Deſcription of *Telemachus*'s Embarkment and ſetting ſail, gives a beautiful Cloſe to this Book. It is as excellent in Mr. *Pope*'s Tranſlation, as it is natural in the Original.

J. P.

LETTER LXIII.

Oxon. March 20, 1742-3.

My Dear,

I Have read over the third and fourth Books of the *Odyſſey*.

The Advice which *Mentor*, or rather *Pallas* in his Shape, gives to *Telemachus*, at the Opening of the third Book, is moſt admirably prudent and juſt.

Verſe

Verſe 62 and 63, are very poetical and inſtructive, to all Degrees of Life.

Verſe 282. Notwithſtanding what Mr. *Pope* ſays here about the Force of Deſtiny, I think no other Defence can be made for *Telemachus*, than his Youth, and that Impatience which naturally ariſes from a long Endurance of Afflictions. The Anſwer of *Pallas*, which is moſt admirable, certainly points it out.

Verſe 333. What a charming Inſtance have we here of the Power of good Advice, when delivered in a pleaſing amiable Way! Poetry and Muſic, united with divine or moral Precepts, conſpire to keep the Mind from giving way to Temptation.

Verſe

Verſe 429. Beſides that this is a very judicious Obſervation in the Poet, for the Reaſons which Mr. *Pope* aſſigns in his Note, it includes an excellent moral Precept to Mankind.

Verſe 496 to 515. What an admirable Picture is given us of *Neſtor* and his Family!

Book iv. Verſe 437. I cannot but think it ſomewhat indecent in *Telemachus* to ſtile his Father *the Man*; but perhaps this is the Fault of the Tranſlator. I have not the Original by me at preſent to determine it.

The Stanza at Line 475, is an Inſtance of what I have often remarked

to

to be one great Point through the whole Work; and at Verſe 635, we ſee it again.

Book v. I agree with you that nothing can be more beautiful than the Grotto of *Calypſo*, and the Environs; but Verſe 177, I think, is a little obſcure; the frequent Repetition of the Word *HE*, without a Diſtinction, ſeems to make it ſo. It runs,

Go then he may; he muſt, if HE ordain;

would it not have been better thus,

Go then he may; he muſt, if JOVE ordain;

Perhaps you will ſay I am cavilling at Words, but I *feel* the Objection ſtrongly. I think too that calling *Ulyſſes the Man*, Verſe 186, is not ſo well; would

would not *the Prince*, or *the Chief*, have done better?

Ver. 294. *Ulyſſes rob'd him in the Cloak and Veſt.*

appears to me not particular enough. There is ſomething too inconſequential for the Hero.

Verſe. 311. Notwithſtanding all that Mr. *Pope* has ſaid in Defence of *Ulyſſes* being able to compleat his Boat in four Days Time, from the Deſcription of it, I think it is hardly probable.

The Critics have been very ſevere on theſe Words, "the well-fought Wall," Verſe 395.

You

You ſee, my Obſervations on this Book are rather employed in finding Faults, than diſcovering Excellencies; and I really think Mr. *Pope* has made more Eſcapes herein, than in any I have read yet.

The Note upon Verſe 454. is very fine, and merits particular Notice.

Book VI. is charming throughout. It gives us a delightful Picture of the Good-nature, Hoſpitality, paternal Affection, and Simplicity of the Manners of the Antients. Verſe 247 and 248, perfectly agree with the holy Pſalmiſt, where He ſays, "Whoſo giveth to the Poor, lendeth to the Lord." Pray return to Verſe 100. and read the Note

on that Line, and the ſubſequent Note, and conſider them carefully. The Manner of *waſhing* obſerved in the Former, is uſual, at this Day, in many Places of Scotland, eſpecially when they waſh what they call great Linen, as Sheets, Table-Cloths, &c.

I thought, my Dear, I ſhould have been able to get through a Book or Two more; for I find what is in the Notes, and what you have obſerved will cut my Work very ſhort; but your Letter is juſt come to Hand, which I have read with vaſt Pleaſure; only I think you go too faſt through *Rochefacault*. I hope to have another from you ſoon on that Subject.

Je

Je vous envoyeray Vendredi, par la Caroſſe de Monſieur *Bew*, une petite Boite avec les deux Comedies. Vous ferez une petite Rejouiſſance la Jour de votre Naiſſance, & Je ferai le Meme, Je vous aſſure. Mes Complimens oû ils ſont dû.

Je ſuis, ma tres chere, petite Ange,

Le Votre,

J. P.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

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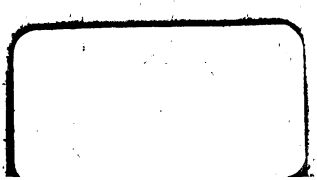
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